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Events of the Week.

THOUGH the situation at Verdun remains one of strain, events in other quarters to which the war has drifted tend to remove the incidence of interest. The week has produced the smallest gain for the enemy since the beginning of the Verdun battle, and the forces seem to have achieved an equilibrium, though an unstable equilibrium. With the exception of a small gain towards Vaux, and another slight advance south of Bethincourt and the clearing of the Crows' Wood, the Germans hold substantially the same positions as last week. They have secured a local success north-west of Rheims; but this is merely a result of the French tactics of holding their front line thinly. Meanwhile the situation in the east is fast approaching a climax. The Russians are nearing Trebizond, are marching across the Taurus towards the ruins of Nineveh and Mosul, and are probably now across the Turko-Persian frontier. If this be so, they are but the same distance from Baghdad as General Townshend at Kut; and the Turks are threatened with an immediate severance of their communications. General Aylmer has been compelled to fall back to the river after attempting to turn the Turkish positions by striking away from it; but the approach of the Russians in their rear must compel the Turks to look to their line of retreat at once. General Smuts is clearing the eastern and northern parts of German East Africa with characteristic vigor. Major-General Peyton has reoccupied Sollum, the western frontier post in Egypt, which was evacuated in December; and the gains of the week seem to be, on the whole, with the Allies.

At the end of last week the enemy was engaged in

a determined attempt to capture the village of Vaux, which lies south-east of Douaumont at the extreme of the French right. The village lies at the head of a long ravine leading to the plateau upon which the Vaux works stand. The main Verdun position, which may be considered as extending from the Poivre Hill about Douaumont to Vaux, has proved too difficult to take by frontal attack. Attempts to turn the position by the left flank have so far proved unavailing, and the Germans consequently turned to the right, or Vaux flank. But, although they made a most determined attack on Vaux, and the Posen troops were engaged late on Friday night, they were unable to achieve more than a momentary footing in the village of Vaux. The fort, though the Germans announced its capture has, so far, not been entered; and the premature jubilation over the event has, in the light of the necessary correction, turned to a mood of depression.

THE other flank has had more attention from the enemy. Last week he directed his efforts to reducing the salient west of the Meuse, and the same section of the line has again come under the most persistent assaults during the past week. The main defensive position, the Charny Ridge, lies some miles in the rear of the line under attack. In advance of Charny Ridge is the Goose Ridge, which must be carried before an assault can be made on the main line of defence further south. The struggle during the week has been to secure the Goose Ridge, and, in fine, its highest point, Dead Man Hill. The French had lost the other peak of the ridge a week ago; but had retained possession of the bulk of Crows' Wood, which defended the direct approaches to Dead Man Hill. The past week opened, however, with the Germans in possession of Crows' Wood, and the enemy even penetrated to the southern edge of Cumières Wood, farther south.

THE French were still strongly entrenched along the Bethincourt-Cumières Road; but Bavarian troops on Tuesday contrived to secure a footing upon Hill 265, which is a lower reach of Dead Man Hill. The French hold Bethincourt, Dead Man Hill, and Cumières; but the Germans have made a dangerous dent between Bethincourt and the critical crest. M. Clemenceau estimates the French losses at one-third the German casualties, and these are reckoned to be about 200,000. No advance so far achieved can be considered worth such an outpouring of blood, and on the situation as it stands at present the French have driven a sound bargain. The boldness of the French command in placing General Pétain in charge of Verdun in the midst of the struggle is but another evidence of the extraordinary military instinct of our Ally. Verdun will ever stand as a monument to another quality—his heroic bravery.

IT is ten days since the German Consul left Trebizond, and the port must by this time be immediately threatened by the Russian troops, who are advancing upon it not only from the east but also from the south-east. To complicate matters for Turkey, the Russian

force operating in Persia is marching along the road, hallowed by the feet of so many devout pilgrims, through the Kermanshah gap towards Baghdad. A week ago it had already occupied Kirind, which is the culminating point of the rim of the Persian plateau, and it must now be descending into the Mesopotamian plain. Kirind is but 130 miles from Baghdad, and in marching upon that ancient city the Russians threaten to cut the communications of the force besieging Kut. General Aylmer, who had apparently attempted to get round the Turks' flank by marching away from the river, met with a vigorous check and had to fall back. The Turkish report states that we left 2,000 dead in the trenches; but that estimate must be received with caution. And while the position at Kut remains critical, it seems certain that within a very short time the Turks will either have to detach a sufficient force to deal with the Russian threat to their communications, or will have to extricate themselves from a position even more critical than that of our beleaguered army.

GENERAL SMUTS has initiated his operations in German East Africa by a series of swift blows. Making use of the same tactics of large sweeping movements, of which he has proved himself a past master, he drove the enemy westward and northward. Last Saturday the enemy stood upon prepared positions on the Kitovo Hills, west of Taveta, and a struggle lasting until midnight took place. An advantage was secured which resulted in the German native troops breaking and making their way towards the south-west. At the same time another part of General Smuts's command was dealing with a force which had been cut off towards the north-east, and a third column was striking westward towards the rear of the main German concentration. As a result of these movements the enemy was driven to seek safety towards the south. On Monday Moshi was occupied, and the British force is marching upon Arusha. The whole of the northern half of the colony will soon be free of the enemy.

THE new submarine campaign, which is stated to be "in full swing," has been coincident with a number of casualties from mines, if it has not been the direct cause of them. We have lost a torpedo-boat destroyer, a torpedo-boat, and an auxiliary ship. In each case there was a number of lives lost, and the whole question is disquieting. The mine peril is apparently not confined to our coasts. A Swedish steamer was sunk last week in Swedish territorial waters; and it is not only naval ships that suffer in the North Sea. One of the finest Dutch liners, the "Tubantia," was sunk on Thursday either by a mine or a torpedo. If these incidents are to be taken as evidence of the use of a new type of mine, we may at least have the consolation of thinking that it is probable some method of guarding against them, as against the older type, will be found. The "Tubantia" is the first neutral liner to be sunk during the war, and the fact that there were American passengers on board must complicate the negotiations which are now proceeding with regard to the sinking of the Norwegian sailing-ship "Silius."

THE man who created the modern German navy has this week resigned his Ministry, and leaves it "with all the honors." Admiral von Tirpitz held his post for twenty years, and has behind him a great record both as an organizer and a politician. He succeeded, where all his predecessors had failed, in inducing the Reichstag to vote ever increasing naval credits, and

certainly, if anything less than a supreme navy can be worth its cost, he gave the taxpayers value for their money. How much his resignation really means we do not as yet know. It may be true that at sixty-six he really was ill and unequal to the strain, but his successor, Admiral von Capelle, is only a few years younger, and belongs, so far as we know, to the same school of thought. That school is, of course, the "future on the waters," "England the enemy," "Calais the objective" school, and it has been throughout the war at grips with the tendency which cares far more about exploiting the East than about "freeing" the seas.

THE compulsion-crisis has suffered another recrudescence. On Wednesday, Lord Derby made a speech in the House of Lords, in which he announced his discovery that "the whole cause of the shortage of men was the reserved occupation lists." It may be presumed that this ends the legend of the "unmarried shirker." At the same time, it is almost certainly the preliminary to a sweeping revision of badges and stars. This prospect becomes ominous when taken in connection with the simultaneous agitation of the married men. Their latest champion is Mr. Gibson Bowles, who, at the invitation of the "Leicestershire Attested Married Men's Protest Society," is standing as their candidate for the Harborough Division. The main plank in Mr. Bowles's platform is "the grave breach of faith which has been committed towards the married men of the country." He is also out against "the fusion of the two party caucuses into an immoral and dangerous coalition," against the present strategy of the Navy, and against the shortcomings of our aerial defence.

On Thursday Sir John Simon, in the debate on the Army Estimates, strongly criticized the consequences of the Compulsion Act, which are now becoming evident. The married men were naturally concerned as to what might be in store for them. They had been sadly misled as to the extent to which the unmarried men remained available for the Army; the figure of 651,000 unaccounted for was "the largest stage army that had ever strutted across any stage since the beginning of the world." The fundamental question was whether the Government really considered and determined the size of the Army at which we ought to aim. Sir John Simon described the present proceedings of the military authorities as a very dangerous policy, and urged that the point had been reached when the question had to be faced whether the further transfer of men from industrial to military activities was for the benefit of the country. Later in the evening, Mr. Walter Long replied to Sir John Simon's speech. He stated that the Government had thought out the problem of the size of the Army, and were also giving consideration to the maintenance of industrial production. But the controversy between Lord Derby and Lord Selborne makes it clear that this problem has not yet been solved as regards our fundamental industry, agriculture.

AUSTRALIA has made so magnificent a response to our Imperial call-to-arms as to make the visit of her Premier, Mr. Hughes, an event of more than ordinary rejoicing. But Mr. Hughes has let us know that he is here on the great business of the consolidation of the economic and political resources of the Empire. His speeches, like those of Sir Robert Borden and other Dominion statesmen, breathe great confidence in the possibility of a closer organic union between Great Britain and her daughter Commonwealths. How far any form of fiscal

communion, short of Imperial Free Trade, is really feasible or desirable, remains to be considered. But nobody, except a handful of constitutional purists, will doubt the propriety and the importance of the first informal step towards organic co-operation in the larger issues of Imperial policy. Our Cabinet is, fortunately, itself so elastic and irregular a growth as easily to adapt itself to new requirements. The invitation extended, therefore, to Mr. Hughes, as recently to Sir Robert Borden, and presently no doubt to the Premier of New Zealand, already on his way across the ocean, to attend the meetings of our Cabinet in their accredited status of Privy Councillors, is highly acceptable to our people.

* * *

How far we can go towards the ideal of Mr. Hughes's speech last Wednesday of "the British Empire as an organized Empire; organized for trade, for industry, for economic justice, for national defence, for the preservation of the world's peace, for the protection of the weak from the strong," it is early to predict. But it is evident that this war has stirred chords of imagination and of passionate sympathy in our Dominions, which may make possible things that were impossible two years ago. We should all say, with Mr. Samuel, that we are "very ready to admit the Dominions into a share in decisions of policy as soon as they desire such admission." But with what we may term the Chambers of Commerce aspiration, the desire to use the heated atmosphere of war emergency to fasten new and definite fiscal arrangements upon the Empire and the Alliance, we have no sympathy, and we are glad to note the tone of caution with which the Home Secretary deprecated the use of "slap-dash methods." "We have to consider the effect of economic changes on our own productive capacity, and on our trade with our Empire, our Allies, and those who are now neutral countries." A hasty policy of present committals might easily throw the last-named countries on to the side of those who are our enemies.

* * *

EAST HERTFORDSHIRE returned Mr. Pemberton Billing, the Independent "air" candidate, to the House of Commons on Friday week, with a majority of 1,031. He received 4,590 votes, against 3,559 cast for Captain Brodie Henderson, who had the support of the combined Liberal and Conservative organizations in the division. This result is proof, if proof were needed, of the existence of a good deal of active, if vague and uninformed, dissatisfaction with the Coalition Government. Mr. Billing's demand for a more energetic anti-aircraft policy had, moreover, a better chance of being listened to in East Hertfordshire than in any other division, for none has suffered more from the German air-raids. In addition to this, the licensed trade seized the occasion to protest against the restrictions on the sale of drink, and the attested married men had an opportunity of letting the Government know that many of them are voters. But probably the main cause of Mr. Billing's success has been the refusal of the Government to take the country into its confidence or to treat criticism as the result of anything deeper than carping and faction.

* * *

GERMANY has this week finally declared war upon Portugal, in a document which described her as "the vassal" of England. The Portuguese case is, of course, that the requisitioning of interned merchant vessels with compensation was within her legal rights, and she has a strong case; for it appears that the Germans, early in

the war, requisitioned some Portuguese vessels in Belgian ports. This small issue is not, of course, the real cause of the breach. Portugal has from the first been anxious to fulfil her duties as an Ally, and Sir Edward Grey's official statement, hinted rather broadly that she had waited until, in our judgment, the appropriate moment for her intervention had arrived. Apart from the question of the ships (seventy ships are not to be despised), the aid, active or passive, of Portugal in the East African campaign may be valuable. Why Germany, however, should have chosen to force the breach to the point of formal war, is not so clear.

* * *

THE Italian Chamber has this week been engaged in a set debate on the policy of the Salandra Ministry. The criticism—and apparently the critical note predominated—turned chiefly on its economic policy. There was, however, a strong current of discontent over the failure to declare war on Germany, and some demands were made for the constitution of a broader Coalition Ministry. The opposition, however, was milder by far than had been expected. The explanation seems to be that an early change of policy is expected, and that assurances, of which the Chamber was aware, had been conveyed by Signor Salandra to Signor Bissolati. The suggestion is that some course of policy will soon be adopted, which will compel Germany to declare war on Italy. Perhaps the requisitioning of German liners in Italian ports, mentioned by Sir Edward Grey on Thursday, is a first move in this direction. Meanwhile, steps have been taken by Mr. Annan Bryce and others to found an Anglo-Italian Bank, which will act as a counterpoise to the penetration of German finance in Italian industry.

* * *

RUMANIA inspires rumor about herself, which is swelling in an audible crescendo. She has voted sums for her partly mobilized army, which seem rather large for peace but not enough for war. She has named the generals for active commands. She has concluded with Russia a convention enabling her to buy and import arms. She is still on the verge of a decided quarrel with Bulgaria, and is even said to have broken off all commercial intercourse with her. All this would be most impressive and encouraging had we not heard its like so often before. On the other hand, the one really official scrap of news is that Germany has bought a million tons of wheat in the Rumanian market.

* * *

It has this week been announced that a special Non-Combatant Corps will be created for such service in France as trench-digging. It will receive a lower rate of pay than the combatant services, and will be led by officers and non-commissioned officers drawn from other corps. This description suggested that it is meant to be what the French call "a punishment battalion" for conscientious objectors, who were to be mulcted of pay, badged for derision, and held incapable of promotion even to non-commissioned rank. A later communication has sought to dispel this idea, by pointing out that men of poor physique but robust conscience may also serve in the corps. The decenter part of public opinion would certainly not tolerate a punitive policy against men who, in the Bishop of Oxford's words, are "not shirkers, men whom you might accuse of fanaticism, but never of cowardice or stupidity." The tribunals, meanwhile, are, with some few exceptions, revealing a total inability to understand either a conscience or an Act of Parliament.

Politics and Affairs.

CONSEQUENCES OF CONSCRIPTION.

ALMOST every problem in the conduct of the war has passed through its "crisis," during which some vital question of policy regarding it was before the country, and public interest was directed towards securing the right decision. In most cases, happily, a single bout of agitation has sufficed to give the problem a permanent impetus towards solution. We may claim this, for example, in the case of the munitions problem, which was as critical as any, in its day. But when a crisis is recurrent, when the fever seems only to have been heightened by the cure, the whole line of treatment to which the problem has been subjected becomes increasingly suspect with each return of the complaint.

The problem of recruiting our armies has certainly fallen into this chronic distemper, and the symptoms inevitably reflect upon the decision in favor of compulsion into which the country was manœuvred several months ago. The compulsion-crisis is always with us, and we never reach the end of those incidental difficulties and drawbacks which the conscriptionist solution shows itself to entail. Each time we are called upon to waive our conception of principle, fairness, and common sense, for the sake of victory in the field and unity at home; and each time the crisis crops up again, with harsher demands for further surrenders, while unity and victory are by no means furthered in the process. We have had a particularly acute recurrence of this during the past week. A "Married Men's Champion" has sprung himself upon the electors of the Harborough Division to contest the seat against the Coalition candidate, who can at any rate claim to stand more for unity than he; while in Parliament itself two sittings have been devoted to an acrid debate on the revision of badges and stars, at a moment when the Government's energy is urgently claimed by broader and more important aspects of the war.

We will take, first, the case of the "reserved occupations," for here, at least, we thought that finality had been reached, and that we knew where we stood. We had imagined that the list was drawn up by experts in council, on pure considerations of national expediency and on grounds of fact which could not change. We were not to increase our fighting-power in soldiers at the cost of ruining our fighting-power in industry and finance. But now the ground quakes under our feet. "Time has made it evident," says Lord Derby in the House of Lords, "that the whole cause of the shortage in men has been the reserved occupation lists." So the unproductive slacker was a myth after all, and the really vital question, whether expediency is to be cast to the winds, and our economic strength crippled to swell the ranks at the front, has been reopened, to be fought out monotonously over again. We can only repeat what we have said from the beginning, that this is a question of rigid expediency and unalterable facts, and that a serious error of judgment in regard to it may be irreparable. Lord Derby himself admits in his speech that "you may destroy the industries of this country by

one false move"; but this hardly allays our misgivings at the actual changes of policy which he goes on to propose. "Up to the present," he continues, "in the competition between Industry and Naval and Military Service, the presumption has been that a man belongs to Industry, and that the onus of proof that he is not required in that industry falls upon the Naval and Military Services. I think that ought to be reversed, and that, in regard to all single men, the presumption ought to be that they belong to the Army, and that the onus of proof that they are useful, from the national point of view, in industrial work, should fall upon the industry in which they are engaged." Taken in its literal sense, that surely applies to the arrangement in force at present. But Lord Derby's meaning, of course, is that there should be a substantial shift of balance in the compromise, to the advantage of the Army and at the cost of industry and trade. There is plenty of room for a "false move" in such a revision, but its danger chiefly depends on who the arbiters in the case are to be. Lord Derby naturally has in mind the experts—the "Reserved Occupations Committee," to which he has already appealed, and the various Government departments. But there is another claimant for the decisive word—the vested interest of the Married Men.

In its leading article on Lord Derby's speech, the "Times" quotes his declaration that "the whole cause of the shortage was the reserved occupation lists," and continues: "That is in substance what the married groups, from their knowledge of their own neighborhoods, maintain." It is a strange reversal of fortune for Lord Derby. He availed himself of the married men's grievance to commit the Government to the compulsion of the single, and now the advocates of conscription *à l'outrance* are setting the married men to jostle Lord Derby, as soon as they suspect him of flagging in the race. The married groups, "from their knowledge of their own neighborhoods," are to have the decision in this vital question of high policy regarding the most effective prosecution of the war. If we reach that point, we have obviously left common sense behind, but it may be worth reminding ourselves that we have rent the national unity in pieces as well.

National unity was to be one of the cardinal virtues of compulsion. "Every man to do his bit"—nothing could be more democratic, and compulsion was merely to organize this equal and universal service in an effective way. Yet from the moment compulsion appeared above the horizon, it split the nation into opposing sections. First it was the married men against the unattested single; and now the unattested married men are numbered among the unrighteous, as well as those single men whose services an impartial board of experts retained for the country's economic requirements at home. Could anything weaken a country more surely in the conduct of a great war than this invidious discrimination of its manhood into sheep and goats? And that is not the worst. The married men are not merely singled out for protection and praise; they are egged on to take active measures for commending and protecting themselves, and to pursue their own narrow

sectional interest, not only against other sectional groups and classes, but against the general interest of the country as a whole. We have the spectacle of an "Attested Married Men's Protest Society" fighting a vacant constituency against the recognized candidate of the National Government. We gather that there are two shades of opinion among these protesters. Some will feel themselves justly called upon to keep their pledge if the remaining single men are purged out of the reserved occupations in sufficient numbers, and the vacancies filled with married men in their place. Others, of a more pharisaic persuasion, insist that all unattested married men ought also to be compelled, before the calling up of the attested elect, though they cannot this time cite any shadow of a promise from the Prime Minister in their support. There is even said to be a minority which only attested at all in the persuasion that the pledge would never have to be redeemed, but would produce its patriotic effect in bringing the unmarried "slackers" by main force into the ranks. These presumably consider that their service to their country is already done, and that no revisions or compulsions on the Government's part could place them personally under the obligation of doing anything more.

The newspapers which support these married men's action are at pains to point out that their conduct is unimpeachably patriotic. We do not believe that they would have taken an equally charitable view if, at the height of the munitions crisis, a Labor candidate had taken his stand, say, for no relaxation of trade union rules without the previous nationalization of war profits. There is something perverse about an agitation which sets out to secure for a country the equal service of all its manhood, and ends by encouraging one section of men to withhold their willing service from the State, until they have made quite sure that all the other sections will be compelled to serve it first. Once again, it casts discredit upon the very policy of compulsion to which this agitation must be traced.

In fact, compulsion is found wanting, whether we measure it by its contribution to our material strength or by its psychological effect on the national concord—the two prime factors in the conduct of the war. And we are not surprised at this result. In accepting compulsion, we sacrificed one of the most deeply-rooted principles of our political tradition. We hoped to reap a Prussian reward; but to give up one's own strong points is no talisman for acquiring one's enemy's.

THE ILLUSION OF VICTORY.

As the war drags on an ever-lengthening course we become more and more involved in a vicious circle. Victory depends upon *moral* and *moral* depends upon victory. It is the appreciation of this fact that urges the German Staff to secure successes even at a heavy cost. Up to a certain point the interest accruing from each speculation more than balances the expenditure of capital, and the tendency to report successes is a sure and shrewd instinct. But with the exception of a few successes, such as Hindenburg's victory in the Masurian Marshes and the capture of Erzerum, the present war

has been conspicuously devoid of unambiguous victories, and *moral* is left to subsist upon the interpretation of the various episodes which emerge from the hourly strife of these mighty armies. And at first sight the enemy seems to have been more victorious, even if we can avoid admitting him plainly and unreservedly victorious. His victories are at least advances; ours seem to be chiefly his failure to achieve greater advances. His victories are obvious; ours are latent.

We can imagine that the less discerning neutrals take some such view of the present state of things, though, even in so doing, they feel equally bound to admit that the reverse is the case as regards the sea. And there are moods in which perhaps everyone tends to doubt what is not obvious and tangible. A century ago there existed a state of things bearing so close a resemblance to the position to-day that the comparison inevitably suggests itself. In 1812 Napoleon had achieved an eminence to which history offers no parallel, and when he entered Moscow it must have seemed that the last pillars of Europe were being shaken. But even with Moscow, the heart of Russia, in his grasp, he could not succeed in making the Tsar recognize his victory, and he waited for some time in the expectation of receiving overtures of peace. It is true that Wellington had entered Madrid, but he had never yet met the soldier of genius, and such a success must have seemed a mere pin prick. No overtures of peace were made, and the fragments of the Grand Army were driven to fight their most terrible battles with the elements. Napoleon hastened back to Paris to prepare further victories, and even when faced by the new coalition—Russia, Prussia, Austria, and Sweden—he still achieved the victory of Dresden, though he lost the full results of it by rashly pressing the pursuit. At Leipzig he offered a splendid resistance, and the Allies were so little confident of their power that, at the end of 1813, they offered him the Rhine boundary. There must have been serious misgivings for that offer to have been made, and they were strengthened when Napoleon, deserted by Murat and with Bavaria against him, refused the Allies' terms.

Early in 1814 the Allies invaded Eastern France, and yet, vastly outnumbered, Napoleon still contrived to dazzle his enemies by victory. He was outfought by Blücher at La Rothère, but defeated the Austrians at Montereau, and on four consecutive days secured victories against the Allies. Such was the outlook, that even then, at Chatillon, he could have secured good terms; but he remained obdurate, and Great Britain, Russia, Austria, and Prussia—which, with France, are the same powers, though differently assorted, that are at war to-day—signed the Treaty of Chaumont not to treat singly for peace or lay down arms until France was driven within her old borders and the complete independence of Germany, Holland, Switzerland, and Spain was secured. Napoleon remained determined to retain the Rhine provinces and Holland, and to the end of the campaign struck terror into the Allies by his rapid marches and the succession of heavy blows he constantly struck against them. When his forces were worn down to critical lengths he planned his boldest stroke. He marched against the Allies' communications

with Germany; but the Allies struck at and captured Paris, which he had left almost unguarded, and which he was unable to save when at length he saw the danger.

In this page of vivid history we may see a striking parallel with the events of the last two years. It is true that so far as there is genius in the war it is not on the side of the enemy to-day. But there are decision, boldness, and vigor; there are the occupation and administration of large alien territories; there is the bold and apparently unshaken front; there is the clear power to win local successes. The shadow which Napoleon threw over Europe was greater not less than that of the Kaiser, and the efforts to remove him seem, like the plans of the Allies to-day, halting in effect, if bold in plan. To the very end it must have seemed almost an open question which way final victory would go. And yet we have the Allies signing much the same pact as that sealed in London, eighteen months ago, and hardening as Napoleon grew the more obdurate. To the argument of preponderance of force Napoleon to the end answered with victories; to those who would deduce failure from attrition he replied with his boldest plan, which was being worked out when the end came. There was even the insensate hatred of this country, and the contriving of various means—including the economic—to strike at us.

Is it not clear, in the face of this, that we cannot safely trust the obvious, and that an enemy may preserve the illusion of strength and formidableness even on the eve of defeat? Napoleon fell through overlooking a vital breach in his armor. It is not difficult to see a parallel in Germany to-day. The heart of a country is no longer the vital centre of a nation. This is to be found solely in the heart of the nation. Armies can no longer be detached from the nation. They *are* the nation, and the spear must quiver and fail when the civilian shank weakens and wavers. Therein lies Germany's oversight. She did not visualize a long war. She had no comprehension of how the country and its people would react to a long and increasingly stringent blockade. The war-weariness which bites deeply into every heart grows intolerable to German people who eat no meal that has not its seasoning of an enemy's sea supremacy. If the face of the war bears a double look to us, it seems equally so to a people who have been encouraged for so long with the promise of speedy victory. Only the irresponsible have held out that hope to the Allies. When we tend to look askance upon a war of attrition, it is well to remember that if Napoleon was not beaten by it, he was not beaten without it. When the enemy makes a new advance, we must not take it to mean that he has still a preponderating force. It is his business to produce the illusion of victory; it is ours to win it.

THE STATE AND "THE TRADE."

THE announcement that the national drink bill for last year amounted to no less a sum than £182,000,000 has shocked every decent-minded person in the land. The sum exceeds by seventeen millions the drink expenditure for the previous year, notwithstanding the fact that a large proportion of the drinking male population is out of the country, and that the Central Control Board began

its operations last July. Although the higher expenditure does not imply a larger consumption, by reason of the rise of prices following increased taxation, so huge a waste of money at a time when the whole energy of the country should be directed to the utmost effort of economy is a scandal of the first dimensions. Nor is it much extenuated by the size of the contribution already made by this expenditure to the revenue. The plain fact remains that in the second year of a war which everybody knows is straining to the utmost all our financial resources, the people are willing and enabled to squander a sum representing some seven per cent. of their total income upon this single luxury. Why has this been permitted? It is evident that millions of patriotic citizens, the vast majority of whom are not total abstainers, were quite prepared for drastic repression of the drink habit at the beginning of the war. Most of them would have been willing to give it up without complaint as a war sacrifice, if they had been persuaded that this course was really serviceable. No effort was made so to persuade them. There were two opportunities, both lost. One was the patriotic lead given by the King. If the Prime Minister, the other members of the Government, and the Houses of Parliament, had solemnly pledged themselves to a personal following of the royal example, the power of this appeal would have persuaded all sorts and conditions of men. This purely voluntary abstention would not only have reduced the national drink bill to trivial dimensions, it would have stamped most forcibly upon the common mind the personal responsibility which every citizen should feel for the conduct of the nation in this great struggle. But this magnificent opportunity was wasted. The other opportunity was the proposal, known to have been pressed upon the Cabinet by Mr. Lloyd George, that the Government should seize the favorable occasion presented by the present emergency to buy up the liquor trade in Great Britain and work it under public control. The magnitude of such a financial operation would not have presented, would not now present, any insuperable obstacle. At a time when our mind is adjusted to deal in national expenditure, no longer by millions or tens of millions, but by hundreds of millions, the project of buying out the interests of the trade by some £250,000,000 of Government stock would contain nothing revolutionary in its character. Had a proposal on these lines been accepted by the Cabinet, we do not think it would have met serious opposition either in Parliament or the country.

Not until the war had run nearly a year of its course was anything done to restrict the sale of liquor. In June of last year the Central Control Board was constituted, and set to work with energy among the chief munition areas where the need was most pressing. In the current issue of the "Contemporary Review" Sir Thomas Whittaker gives an exceedingly effective statement of the labors of the Board and their results up to date. With the general character of the restrictions upon hours of opening, now operative over the greater part of the country, everybody is familiar. But from Sir Thomas Whittaker's article they will gather certain information which measurably demonstrates the practical reforms

already achieved by the new regulations, and they will infer the still greater gains that would accrue from a complete measure of permanent national administration. Though the statistics of convictions for drunkenness are not in themselves a perfect index of the abuse of drink, they have considerable value when taken in large areas for the weeks immediately preceding and succeeding the new orders. A reduction in convictions amounting for England and Wales to 42 per cent., for Scotland to 32 per cent., as a direct result of the first application of the orders, is a notable achievement. But even more important is the testimony of employers to the improved regularity and efficiency of labor. From the Tyne and elsewhere exact evidence is already available, showing the diminution in the loss of time, especially at the beginning of the week. The abolition of the early morning "nip" has probably done most to check this loss of time. Early drinking on the way to work has been a fixed habit with large sections of our workers, far more injurious to physique and working efficiency than heavier drinking in the evening. It is worthy of remark that the loud talk of working-class revolt against the interference with the liberty to drink, so copiously threatened by the trade when the new restrictions were announced, has come to nothing. Even in Scotland, where the drink habit prevails most powerfully, and where whisky is the national drink, it deserves attention that the Chief Constable of Glasgow and the Licensing Court should agree in recommending the total prohibition of the sale of spirits, and that they should be supported by the chief employers' associations in the shipbuilding and engineering trades. These experienced and responsible men evidently believe that total prohibition, at all events for the duration of the war, is a practicable measure for those parts of Scotland where labor is most strongly organized and most insistent on its rights.

But advantageous as the new restrictions have shown themselves to be in stemming that growth in the abuse of drink which high wages and the artificial prosperity of war-time threatened, the nation ought not to rest content with this situation. War-time has only emphasized dangers which exist in normal times of peace. The power of the drink traffic to impoverish the home, to damage the moral and intelligence of the people, and to impair the economic capacity of the working and employing classes, has hitherto been strongly entrenched in the political influence which the Trade has been able to exert upon the electorate, Parliament, and the Government. The methods by which this anti-social power is exerted are notorious. Their peril, even in peacetime, has been recognized by every informed student of our political system. It is more than twenty years since Lord Rosebery, denouncing "the curse of drink," warned the nation that "if the State does not soon control the liquor traffic, the liquor traffic will control the State." It always has controlled the State whenever it has deemed it necessary to exert all its powers for the protection of its profits and its privileges. Even now there is little evidence that this power is abated. It has been enabled to pass on, if not the whole, then the greater part of any burden of fresh taxa-

tion to the consumer; it has recently stopped the inclusion of barley in the list of prohibited imports, and the results of last year's trading show that well-managed brewery companies are as profitable as ever. Influential statesmen at the Guildhall and elsewhere press upon the unorganized consuming public the duty of cutting down their expenditure to the utmost limit in order to help the State to finance the war. But to expect from the mass of the people a voluntary individual revolution of their standards of consumption is to expect a moral miracle. They will not do it. That does not mean that they deliberately or consciously refuse to sacrifice pleasure and comforts to the need of their country. It means that such sacrifices must be organized collectively. If the Government even now, after all its shilly-shally and delay, were to pluck up courage enough to acquire possession of all the licensed houses in the country, as it has done in three munition areas, and to suspend all sale of alcoholic drink during the further progress of the war, it is our firm conviction that the nation would acquiesce in and approve this policy. Even were it not prepared to impose at a single step a policy of complete abstinence, the dispossession of the private trade would greatly facilitate the operation of whatever measures of further control and restriction were deemed advisable. We are glad to see from a circular letter, containing among other influential names those of the editor of the "Spectator," Mr. George Barnes, and the Chairman of the Liverpool Licensing Justices, that a renewed attempt is on foot to press upon the Government the consideration of the immediate purchase of the Drink Trade by the State, and that the signatories propose to organize a conference to promote this object. The only alternative we see to this method is a general instruction to all Tribunals acting under the Military Service Act to refuse exemption to all unmarried and attested married men working in breweries, distilleries, or in other allied industries. No one can pretend that any branch of the liquor trade is a "vital" industry. Why, then, should any men of military age be released for its working?

AMERICAN IMPERIALISM.

For the second time since the fall of Porfirio Diaz, the American Government has been compelled, against its will, to intervene with armed force in Mexico. Mr. Wilson had on this occasion no choice. When he sent an expedition to Vera Cruz, because General Huerta had hedged over some niceties of procedure in his apologies to the American flag for a minor insult, he seized an opportunity which enabled him to shorten the obnoxious rule of that unrecognized dictator. This time the offence could not have been overlooked by any self-respecting Government. Villa's bandit soldiery, after a long series of unconscionable excesses on Mexican soil, had actually taken to raiding on American territory. The chaos might be permitted to burn itself out in Mexico without interference, but it could not be allowed to spread across the frontiers of the States. Mr. Wilson has been very careful to respect the sovereignty of Mexico. He has discussed his measures with

General Carranza, although the nominal head of the Mexican Republic has no real authority in the Northern States which Villa dominates. The pursuit of Villa's partisans by General Funston's forces will have the appearance of a campaign carried out in concert with Carranza's "regulars," and the "face" of Mexico has been saved by the permission granted to Carranza's men to pursue the rebels, if necessary, on to American territory. An intervention which opens with this scrupulous respect for international forms, is unlikely to develop into anything that might commit the United States to an extensive invasion or a prolonged occupation. American opinion regards a campaign in Mexico with undisguised distaste. Against a savage enemy amid a hostile population in a wide and sparsely peopled country, it cannot at the best be easy. But its difficulty is probably overestimated. If an effective blockade could deprive the enemy of munitions, a well-found modern army would have little difficulty in seizing and holding the chief cities and routes, though to break up every guerilla band and police the whole country might be an enterprise calling for great forces and inordinate expense. The present limited and local intervention may, on the other hand, prove to be a real and comparatively easy step towards the pacification of Mexico. If it makes an end of General Villa, and at the same time imposes an obligation on General Carranza, that semi-respectable personage may be enabled to establish his administration with just that degree of friendly dependence on Washington which is needed to assure its future.

There can be little doubt that Mr. Wilson's personal reluctance to embark on any policy of military adventure reflects the dominant instincts of the American people. He has been sharply criticized, it is true, by Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Root for the weakness of his Mexican policy, and it is probable that a Republican Administration, if it had been in power, would have acted with more enterprise, though possibly with less wisdom. But, so far as we can gather, even the Republican Party would have included (and does now include) a large minority with a "passivist" outlook, while the Democratic Party, on the whole, is even less inclined to active measures than its leader. The few extensions of commitments overseas into which the Administration is led from time to time, are curiously and deliberately undramatic. Hayti is induced to put itself by treaty under American protection, but this disreputable negro island has seemed to invite the yoke by its own voluntary act—if anything done by its venal chiefs can be called voluntary. Nicaragua comes as quietly within the orbit of Washington's policy, and, although a body of American marines has played some part in this diplomatic success, their function was only to lend moral support to the faction in power, which paid for its assured tenure of office by signing a treaty highly advantageous to the Power which controls the Panama Canal. These little diplomatic successes are managed with a kind of furtive delicacy; they seem to add nothing to the prestige of the Administration, and with difficulty escape the negative vigilance of the Senate. There are, we suppose, two main reasons why America differs so

profoundly from Europe in its attitude to Imperialism. It is still absorbed in its own internal growth. It has only just begun to export capital to place investments abroad, and to covet concessions. Rapidly as it lives and works, it may yet spend two or three generations before it has raised the whole of its vast territory to a uniform level of development. Nor does it need, as Germany especially does, to concern itself with the sources of its raw material. Save for a few tropical products, it is independent of foreign supplies, and its industrialists are under no temptation to inspire a policy of conquest for the sake of acquiring rich mineral deposits. With this absence of temptation there goes the consciousness of the lack of power. The root fact behind American policy in its "watchful waiting" and its infinite patience towards chaos on its own borders, is simply the absence of an army, and the absence of the will to make one.

It is questionable whether this characteristic American passivity in foreign affairs can survive the shock of this war. The expansion of the State militias on such a plan as Mr. Wilson favors against Mr. Garrison's sounder military opinion, would do little to give America an army that might modify her habits and theories of policy. A much smaller increase of her standing professional army would do more to alter this outlook. But the spectacle of our war tells in two directions. If it stimulates one cast of mind to demand "preparedness," it deepens the resolve of the other to avoid the abominations of war. Our ghastly object-lesson has probably made Americans not more but less anxious to involve themselves in a Mexican complication. It tells even in the rather compromising attitude of the Democrats towards the Philippines. In preparing to concede full autonomy to those still immature islands, they seem to be guided by an anxiety to avoid complications with Japan, though the retention of a control over their foreign relations leaves the danger-point still exposed. Japan, however, is now so deeply engaged in the far larger enterprise of establishing her paramount authority in China that she may conceivably remain outside the area of any possible friction with the States for a generation to come. On a broad view, the experience of this war enforces the general lesson that America cannot hope to maintain her isolation, and cannot play her part in world-politics without armaments. But an acute opportunist might make a plausible case for the opposite view. This war, he might say, whatever its issue, will have sated the militant passions of Europe for a generation. No victor can emerge with resources enough for the vast adventure of troubling the New World. Japan cannot absorb China in less than a generation. The "A B C" States of Latin America are meanwhile growing so rapidly that in the same space of time they will be stout pillars of the Monroe Doctrine. Where, then, is the danger to the United States? There is so much to be said for both these views that the outcome of their clash will probably be an indefensible compromise. The great navy will be built, for it outrages no tradition. The great army will not be created, and American Imperialism will remain, in consequence, the dream of a few picturesque Independents, with Mr. Roosevelt at their head.

Life and Letters.

ABOVE THE BATTLE.

FROM above the battle, "able to look down from the high plateaux of Switzerland into all hostile camps," M. Romain Rolland surveys a Europe perishing in the furnace fire of war. Four years ago, in a remarkable prophecy, he had predicted the outbreak of this cataclysm. "The fire smouldering in the forest of Europe," he wrote then, "was beginning to burst into flames. In vain did they try to put it out in one place; it only broke out in another." "All Europe—Europe that only yesterday was sceptical and apathetic, like a dead wood—was swept by the flames. The world felt that it was at the mercy of an accident that might let loose the dogs of war. Europe looked like a vast armed vigil." The great writers of Britain, secure in an island sheltered by "triumphant seas," never experienced or even anticipated that sense of inevitable destruction, which one discovered everywhere abroad—the knowledge, almost instinctive of the imminent catastrophe, the approach of the whirlwind and the breaking of the seals, and the "thunder of the trumpets of the night." But that instinctive feeling was all over the frontiers, and everywhere afflicting and irritating and making intolerable the life of man. It was as if a watcher could lay his ear to the ground, and everywhere hear the tramp of armed men and the noise of the guns; as if (as in the old legends of past days) signs and portents had appeared in the sky—the signs that "foretell the death and fall of kings." There are those who accepted it all with a shrug and a smile, who went on their way with pleasure perhaps enhanced by the knowledge of how short that time of pleasure would be. There were those who strove desperately for peace and understanding—international Christians, international Socialists, leaders in art and literature and the sciences—always struggling for a losing cause, always, as it were, slipping down a little, and again a little, as the powers which made for destruction increased in dominance and pride. Until at last, almost by a casual incidence, certainly beyond the fixing of responsibility on any single man, the "dead wood" of civilization flared into flame, and humanity confronted another end of a world.

What can one do, when compelled to look on, as M. Rolland is compelled to look on, and see the forces of material destruction and the forces of spiritual death, thus ravaging and destroying the bodies and souls of men? Some answer, though but for the most part an impassioned protest, with disconnected letters and appeals which represent little but a cry of ineffectual agony, is given in the writings ("Above the Battle." By Romain Rolland. Allen & Unwin) he has issued to the world. "In general," he declares, "the sentiments expressed have arisen out of indignation and pity. In proportion as the immensity of the ruin extends one feels the poverty of protest, as before an earthquake." "There is more than one war," Rodin wrote to him, eighteen months ago. "What is happening is like a punishment which falls on the world." He is torn by the demand on his allegiance of the citizenship of two kingdoms, each equally imperious in demanding whole-hearted loyalty. "For the finer spirits of Europe," he declares, "there are two dwelling places; our earthly fatherland, and that other City of God. Of the one we are the guests, of the other the builders. To the one let us give our lives and our faithful hearts; but neither family, friend, nor fatherland, nor aught that we love has power over the Spirit. The Spirit is the light."

He is faithful to the City of which he is a guest; and in words of passionate indignation he hurls reproach and defiance upon that Germany which had smashed clumsily and brutally into Belgium and France, trampling down as if in drunken delirium, not only churches and high cathedrals and the treasured works of man, but also all established and accepted ideals of honor, chivalry, and compassion. In bitter taunts, first to Gerhart Hauptmann, afterwards to all the intellectuals of Germany, he challenges any thing which remains sane and pitiful in the squalor of that scientific "Imperialism" to protest against and to clear itself from silent acceptance of that hideous outrage. "You are giving the world a proof that incapable of defending the liberty of the world, you are even incapable of defending your own." "I am expecting an answer from you, Hauptmann, an answer that may be an act. At such a time silence is itself an act." "Of all the shortcomings of Prussian Imperialism, the worst and the vilest is to have concealed its crimes from its people. For, by depriving them of the means of protesting against those crimes, it has involved them for ever in the responsibility; it has abused their magnificent devotion." He mocks at the clumsiness of their defences, the insolence of their assumption, the madness of their pride; "blind guides," as he calls them, leading their nation into the ditch; "wretched creatures, you, representatives of the spirit, who have not ceased to extol force and to despise the weak, as if you do not know that the wheel of fortune turns." He ascribes this unclean thing to the "evil marriage of idealism and German force" in which the idealism proves to be a German woman, a woman captive, like so many worthy German wives, who "worship their lord and master, and refuse even to think that he could ever be wrong." "Prussian Imperialism has crushed down over your eyes and conscience its spiked helmet."

So far M. Rolland has the judgment of Europe with him—of Europe and the civilized world. He finds such judgment also in the letters of the young men in Germany, many now dead, as the madness of war of the first few months disappeared, and the vision of all that had happened in Belgium and Northern France began to disturb their dreams. Baron von Bieberstein, the son of the Ambassador, in an "Appeal to the German Peoples," published after his death in battle, pleads that this war may be the last. That is the conviction of those at the front who are witnesses of the unspeakable horrors of modern warfare. But he adds confession and a *mea culpa* for the sins of Germany. "The war has opened my eyes," he says, "to our own terrible unlovableness. Everything has its cause. We must have given cause for this hatred, and even in part have justified it." Some of these letters contain bitter complaints from the dead against their rulers who have brought them thither; some half articulate cries to God, from men possessed of horror in the midst of massacre; some fierce denunciation of the journalists, professors, old men, and leaders of policy who have directed them towards this end. It is the cry of the young against the old, of the individual against the machine, as yet scarcely articulate, choked immediately by the dust and ashes of death. But it may be destined to rise into violence until all the German peoples take up the song of revolt against a system and overlordship by which Germany, under the promise of gaining the whole world, has surrendered her own soul.

But M. Rolland is also endeavoring to be faithful to that other City also—the City of which we are the builders. This war, he declares, is a civil war. From Holland and Spain he receives and welcomes demands

for the assertion of "the moral unity of Europe." That unity must be preached to-day, however unheeded: it must be attained to-morrow or in a generation, or in the generations which will follow those who will die, "not having seen the promises." Justice must be administered, but bitterness can be removed, and the desire for reprisals and revenge. "A great nation does not revenge itself. It re-establishes justice. But let those in whose hands lies the execution of justice show themselves worthy of her to the end." And he is not here thinking so much of a future material destruction of Germany, but of a present spiritual destruction of France—that "douce France" of which he is so proud, in her long past history of chivalrous deed, in her endurance through defeat and all misfortune, in the splendid devotion of her sons. He glories in that devotion, as expressed in her young writers, serving with the colors, who boast of the return of the days of '93, of fighting for the triumph of democracy in Europe—for "more than our hearths and homes, for the awakening of liberty." One who "will be, if he lives, the first art critic of our time," writes to him: "France is not about to die: it is her resurrection which we see. For throughout history—Bouvines, the Crusades, the Cathedrals, the Revolution—we remain the same, the knight-errants of the world, the paladins of God. I have lived long enough to see it fulfilled: and we who prophesied it twenty years ago to unbelieving ears may rejoice to-day." Only it is just because of this splendor of idealism that he will leave to Prussia the motto "Oderint dum metuant." He wishes France to fight without hatred, and "to regard even those against whom she fights as misguided brothers." He wishes for the end, to those that will see the end, forgiveness and reconciliation. "There must come a day when you will stretch out the hand of friendship across the Rhine. You will have to establish supportable and humane relations." "Do not break down all the bridges, since it will ever be necessary to cross the river. Do not destroy the future." The preaching of this belief should be the special task of those outside the struggle: the preparation, in kind treatment of prisoners and non-combatant "alien enemies," in the tending of the wounded of all alike, in honor paid to the dead. Such should be the work of the "little lay Church which to-day more than the other, preserves its faith, in the unity of human thought, and believes that all men are sons of the same Father."

Dreams, idealistic fancies, expressions of literature divorced from reality—so such appeals are openly condemned to-day by the men who delight in war and hurl insults on their foes. But to-day is to die, that to-morrow may be born. The crocus and wild flowers have already made beautiful the graves of the dead. And spring and high summer and the ripe fruits of autumn will transmute and glorify ruined dead cities and all the hideous scars of war. "Do not break down all the bridges" must remain the appeal of all who hope for any future of humanity. "Over the Carnage rose prophetic a Voice," cried Whitman, from the heart of a combat at whose violence all who looked on stood amazed. "Be not disheartened. Affection shall solve the problem of freedom yet." Humanity is not destined always to inhabit ruins: and the ideal is but hidden, not destroyed. "May Notre-Dame la Misère," is Rolland's prayer, "lay on the brow of raging Europe her stern but succouring hand. May she open the eyes of these peoples, blinded by pride, and show them that they are but poor human flocks equal in the face of suffering: suffering at all times so great that there is no reason to add to the burden."

THE NEW THEATRE.

THE English reader in war-time takes up with a sense of incongruity an American book which bears the promising title, "The Theatre of To-day" (John Lane). It is the theatre of yesterday now, and it costs a mental effort to remember that these æsthetic problems interested us less than two years ago. One day they will interest us again, and the author, Mr. H. K. Moderwell, may even have prophesied more sagely than he knew, when he dwelt on the universality of the modern stage, and its mission in diffusing an international culture. The book, it must be frankly said at once, is mainly an enthusiastic eulogy of the German theatre, alike in its technical experiments and in its social aspect. Among the forces which had been revolutionizing the theatre in the last ten years, the pioneer work of Mr. Gordon Craig comes first, and the impulse of the wayward Russian genius, now barbaric and again profoundly spiritual, can hardly be overrated. The French tradition maintains the supremacy of its style and workmanship, and this brilliant and learned American critic rates the work of our own contemporary dramatists a great deal higher than the mass of their own countrymen do. The theatre is everywhere alive, and all over Europe there are men or schools who deserve study and attention. But the fact remains that the most stimulating innovations in lighting, staging, and architecture, in the shaping of new dramatic forms, and, above all, in the creation of a co-operative people's theatre, have their origin in Germany. It is a good corrective to the heated mood of war-time, which naturally insists on the perversions and limitations of German culture, to turn to such a record as this of its recent achievements in the world of art. Political hostility may work havoc in the intellectual world by checking the salutary influence of one national spirit on another. Isolation means sterility, and the ferment of ideas and artistic creation is commonly most active where the streams of many national tendencies meet. We shall never again take up our broken purposes and our interrupted tendencies exactly as they were before the war. For long years, amid the general impoverishment, a writer like Mr. Moderwell, who discourses cheerfully of State subsidies and municipal theatres, will seem to mock us. It is possible that in the theatre, as in much else, the torch of the race may pass into the hands of the pacific American democracy. But at least we can beware of building Chinese walls across the stage and the study of Europe. We must maintain free trade in ideas.

A critic of the older generation would begin a history of the modern theatre with Ibsen. The newer school starts from influences more recent than his, and the first of them is mechanical invention. That may not seem, to those who are weary of the old commercial stage, with its costly triumphs in the material accessories of drama, a promising beginning. We are never shocked when historians talk of the part of the printing press in the revival of learning, but we are conscious of some faint prejudice when we are told that the modern theatre begins with revolving stages and new lighting devices. Strange to say, the chief effect of these mechanical innovations has been to discredit the cruder conventional realism, and to give new life to the poetic and symbolical drama. The new stage devices, from the costly revolving stage, through the rolling stage, to the cheap and indispensable waggon-stage, are indeed conveniences of general application, which hardly favor one form more than another. The real revolution has come from the

new handling of light and color. One could hardly exaggerate the part which the traditional footlight played in maintaining all the more hampering conventions of the stage. If you are debarred from the use of shadow on the stage, you are not merely hampered by inability to reproduce any semblance to daylight, you are also debarred from any decorative use of masses of shade. The invention of the Fortuny system of lighting, with its soft and natural reflected light, removed this handicap (especially when the white-domed stage roof was used with it) and brought into play a new magic of color. The stage had suddenly achieved the possibility of producing what painters call "atmosphere." Color and light might, it is true, have been employed simply to give more verisimilitude to stage settings. In point of fact their chief part has been to make possible a new appeal to the mood of the spectator. Goethe experimented a century ago with the influence of color on the emotions. The Russian composer Scriabine devised a curious color-piano, by which a display of subtly blending shades would accompany his music, and reinforce its emotional (or, as he would have said, its spiritual) significance. It is on these lines that the contemporary German and some of the Russian innovators are moving. But the revolution is more sweeping than this. The modern stage has suddenly discovered the full meaning of style. Mr. Moderwell is altogether too sweeping when he writes as though the older conventional theatre was indifferent to beauty in its interiors and its scenery. It often aimed at it, and sometimes achieved it, in a pedestrian, uninspired way. But it certainly had not dreamed that the setting of a play might be an expression of an artist's personality, an effort as daring and creative as a painting or a statue. The commercial poster developed style sooner and more easily than stage scenery. There are, we think, two distinct elements in the revolution which Mr. Gordon Craig led. In the first place, it was a revolt against the plodding effort of the old scenic artist to represent too much. He tried, as far as a difficult and hampering medium would allow, to represent everything, and the result was that he expressed nothing. The same scena would serve him for comedy as well as tragedy. He took no heed of the emotional content of the play, and strove only to depict a scene as it might be "in fact," and without regard to its imaginative bearing on the play. If you asked him to paint you a medieval castle for a grim murder, and one of the same period for a joyous tourney, the good literal man would purvey the same article of commerce, a castle of the period as per scenario. Mr. Gordon Craig expresses in its extremest form the reaction against this unthinking habit, when he says that if we are producing "Julius Caesar" we must not try to represent the Roman Forum (or our idea of it), but simply "a man speaking to a hundred thousand men." Your scene, in plain words, must enable the eyes of the spectator to contribute their part to the whole emotional effect. Everything else is irrelevant, distracting, and superfluous. This theory results in an economy of means which adds a thousand-fold by its suggestion to the dramatic effect. One Gothic pillar against deep masses of shadow, with Gretchen kneeling by it, will convey its poetical effect infinitely better than a literal section of a cathedral, whose needless detail only distracts the roving attention. A dark wall and a staircase against it will serve for Lady Macbeth's sleep-walking incomparably better than a meticulous archaeological castle. The other tendency, which went hand-in-hand with this, was the determination of the artist who had won his own freedom of expression, to make his scene a delightful decorative

scheme, a thing of independent beauty, apart altogether from its relation to the play.

We are not sure whether the time has yet come to estimate the effect of these deeply interesting innovations upon actors and dramatists. Mr. Moderwell, in this most enlightening introduction to the modern theatre, says hardly anything about the actor's art, and his chapters on the literary side of the theatre occupy less space than his chapters on its mechanism and its finance. We should like to know how modern styles and ideals of acting, which have steadily aimed at greater realism and intimacy, blend with this tendency in staging to impressionism and decorative effect. The revolution, if it is not yet complete, is certain to fulfil itself. The bigger question is whether this development, which has suddenly made the more external aspect of stagecraft exciting, and to some minds satisfying, must not react unhappily on the literary side of the stage. If the producer can gain his greater effects only with poetical dramas that lend themselves to the simpler treatment of passion by the symbolism of color and light, must he not lose his interest in the realistic modern play? He will clearly prefer the later to the early Ibsen, and d'Annunzio to both. When that happens, the literary craftsman will in his turn adapt himself. The German stage has in fact been curiously barren during the last ten years in modern realistic plays, but it has been prolific in all manner of historical, symbolical, and poetical plays. This would matter little if their quality were high, but it happens to be poor. It looks as though the playwright might sink under this development to the level of the poetaster who supplies the libretto for opera. There is no necessary reason why the music should depress the verse of an opera, nor yet why the new magic of stylistic presentation should depress the literary quality of a play. But, in fact, the latter result is only too likely to be as common as the former. If Dr. Reinhardt had been alive and at work in the golden days of Athens, we doubt if *Æschylus* would have been quite so great a poet. If the poet or the musician sits down to write and compose with the knowledge that his audience will come to the theatre rather with excited eyes than expectant ears, the quality of their work will suffer. We may expect a great development of the symbolic poetical play, of which Andreieff's "The Life of Man" is the forerunner. These plays will be written consciously to afford scope for the new technique, and their intellectual content may suffer from this modern "pride of the eyes." It is an interesting but a perilous revolution which these German producers have set afoot.

THE CLEAN SWEEP.

DIGGING among the raspberries, we find, by way of reminder rather than new discovery, that the great convolvulus has won great headway there. The big white tubers are turned up in heaps like dishes of macaroni. They run down into the subsoil, and a bit broken off there will serve to renew the evil crop. Worse still, they run into the roots of the raspberries, into the heart of the growth whence the stools spring, so that the only way to get them up is to uproot the host, clean it, and put it back. That is to make the next crop a poor one, but the same penalty attaches to leaving the parasite in possession. We have done that too often already. Our "Fill-baskets" have belied their name, and the convolvulus is chiefly to account for it. We will dig up the whole forest, replant the best young canes in new land free from weeds, and, having taken out every

visible bit of bindweed, make the matter doubly sure by raising a crop of potatoes on the old site.

Even that is not enough. Next to the raspberries is a herbaceous border, and in the roots of our favorite flowers the enemy lurks, ready to outflank us at the first opportunity. The clean sweep must go right to the path. The border-stones must be taken up and searched for the pest. Then perhaps, if we can sterilize the rest with a strong kill-weed, we may have peace in this patch for some years. New perennials shall stand here, needing no more work than mulching and gathering, making the whole force of the soil tributary to their beauty and sweetness, sharing none of it with wild buccaneers. Even the moved canes, carefully planted, will yield better fruit and almost as much of it in the first year as in the last year among the weeds. If they were thrown away or burnt, the potatoes that take their room would buy ten times their crop, three things at least contributing to this result—abolition of weeds, change of work for the soil, and winter fallow.

The advantages of the particular operation are so obvious that we are looking round to see what other clean sweeps may not be the best policy. Shall we leave the tares to rob the crop till one more harvest has been reaped, or shall we get rid of all now while the beautiful frosts are with us? The soil, almost any soil, has the potential elements of a hundred crops. We are obliged to manure it only because so little of the potential is available. We keep it so thoroughly locked up from the opening action of the frost. When the ice had gone in two inches, we took a fork and up-ended the surface in foot-square slabs like paving-blocks, making the place like a city street disturbed by shell-fire. Now the frost may go in another two inches, and, when the final thaw comes, the soil shall be new soil again, its purse strings loosened, its lately hoarded wealth in circulation, all things possible to it.

An easy ten days' work at this slab-raising would cover an acre. Some worn-out pastures could be as quickly laid open to the action of the frosts that may not have touched them for a hundred years. One of our training battalions could so turn up a hundred acres in a day, working less hard, and perhaps doing itself as much good from the training point of view as by a long route march. If every battalion had given one day out of its twelve months' training to this work, our new army would by now have seriously begun the cultivation of some two hundred thousand acres. It would not be hard to find so much as worthy of a clean sweep as even our convolvulus-choked raspberry patch.

Some pastures are robbed of from a fourth to three-fourths of their grass-producing capacity by scabious and yellow rattle, others on the richest and strongest soil by millions and millions of buttercups, others by wild carrot, and others by a variety of weeds too numerous to mention, making a succession of unprofitable gaiety from April to October. We can change the proportion of good plants to bad by sundry top-dressings. There is an ideal pasture, never yet seen, that will always produce plentifully only the best grasses. In truth, there are thousands of acres that ought to be rubbed out like a dirty slate, and restarted on their career of usefulness. An acre of ploughing is like three acres of grass. Its top-soil is three times as deep, and the crop it can produce at least three times as valuable.

Most of us have to do without the clean sweep, because we cannot afford it. Tinkering seems much cheaper than reconstruction, and at any rate is better within the means of the impecunious man. By means of a very small annual dose of very cheap labor, we can

just get a dividend on a very small capital from a large patch of grass and buttercups. If the same labor on less land would yield more income, still we prefer the more land. It sounds better to be called a farmer than a small holder. They might even call us peasants if we made ten acres do the work of a hundred, as the Danes do. The wage we pay of from twelve to eighteen shillings a week fails to hold even so many cowmen and shepherds as we want. As soon as they can, men desert us and run to the towns for more money. To farm the land better would not only mean more labor, but a greater wage for the labor we already employ. So we tinker at the weeds instead of sweeping them away, and by dint of using a great deal of land, manage to make a meagre living.

Now that labor shortage has become worse than ever because of the war, Lord Selborne is calling upon the farmers to produce more food, also because of the war. It is easy enough to show that the land is abundantly capable of supplying this urgent need, not so easy to show how without a revolutionary effort the farmers can give it the opportunity. Something could be done, by means of a little co-operation, with the motor ploughs, whose trials are recorded in a recent number of the "Journal of the Board of Agriculture." One of them ploughed, with a double furrow, one and a-half acres in four hours. It costs £200, and is worked by one man. There is already rather abundant choice of machines at this price, and capable of its turnover of three acres a day. Two teams of horses might pay for such a plough, which should replace many teams if sent the round of several small farms.

However, if land is not to become conscript during the war, it will not be till after the war that new methods will have any chance of catching hold of British agriculture. Then will come home those who have learnt the necessary ruthlessness, who have seen not merely fields but towns destroyed, not entirely to their disadvantage, who have become familiar with the great use of machinery, who realize the effectiveness of co-operative labor, the value of discipline, the power of energy. We can imagine ex-sergeants attacking the buttercups without prepossessions in their favor, insisting that each acre shall produce its best possible, devising a new problem on a clean slate, and seeing that it is carried out. Perhaps it is because the country is engaged in such tremendous work in Flanders that a forced stay-at-home undertakes a thorough dealing with a small raspberry bed.

Communications.

THE CALL OF LIBERTY.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—A constitutional opportunity has now been afforded to those representatives in Parliament who complain of the operation of the Defence of the Realm Regulations, and the Government have put forward an answer. In pursuance of the examination of these matters in recent issues of THE NATION, I now propose to offer some further reflections prompted by the occasion.

At the outset, it should be clearly indicated that the question of the legality of Regulation 14B, which has recently given rise to grave judicial decisions, will not be pursued here. In THE NATION of February 19th, 1916, the present writer dealt fully with the legal issues involved, and expressed a strong opinion which he sees no reason for revising. The writ of Habeas Corpus is the principal bulwark of British liberty, as Hallam said, and pending the specific suspension of the Habeas Corpus Acts, which can only be effected constitutionally by Act of Parliament, and

by no Order in Council, that guarantee of personal liberty is available to every citizen who seeks its protection.

Let us re-state the question in order that no confusion may be caused. The King's judges have decided that the Government may intern any person they choose without trial by reason of his (or her) hostile origin or association! This judicial decision rests upon the validity of an Order in Council framed by Sir John Simon, who declares that he fully explained its nature to Parliament.

It will be recalled that the drastic character of the regulations frequently issued by the Government under the Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act, 1914, gave rise to increasing disgust both in the country and in Parliament. The loudest complaints related to the treatment of persons apprehended for offences under these regulations, and some judicial proceedings occurred in which the rights of the subject appeared to be set aside by the Government under the authority of the emergency statute. Sir John Simon, at that time Home Secretary, gave the following reassurance in the House of Commons on March 2nd, 1915. He said: "If a British subject is arrested in connection with the Defence of the Realm Act, and an unreasonable time elapsed before he was told what was the charge against him, it would take a great deal of argument to convince me that he would not be able to move for a writ of Habeas Corpus to hear the charge made against him, or alternately for his release." Eminent lawyers in the House also concurred in this opinion, and there the matter rested.

Some time afterwards, however, Parliament saw fit to pass the Defence of the Realm (Amendment) Act, 1915, which enacted: "Where a person, being a British subject, but not being a person subject to the Naval Discipline Act or to military law, is alleged to be guilty of an offence against any regulations made under the Defence of the Realm Consolidation Act, 1914, he shall be entitled, within six clear days from the time when the general nature of the charge is communicated to him, to claim to be tried by a civil court with a jury instead of being tried by a court-martial, and where such a claim is made in manner provided by regulations under the last-mentioned Act the offence shall not be tried by court-martial" (Section 1 [2]). This Act is the last statute passed by Parliament for the securing of the right of civil trial to the citizen charged with an offence under the regulations. It has never been repealed, and is still available under the conditions it explicitly defines.

Three months after, Sir John Simon, as Home Secretary, framed a new regulation (14B), which was issued under an Order in Council. This regulation empowered the Home Secretary to imprison a person without trial, and its author now declares that he fully explained its character to Parliament. This is said to have been done on June 17th, 1915, seven days after the issue of the regulation. Sir John, on March 2nd, 1916, quoted his words of June 17th, 1915, on which he relies to prove his contention that Parliament knew the character of the new regulation and acquiesced in it. But he stopped on March 2nd, 1916, at a particular point, and in the next sentence but one on June 17th, 1915, he said: "We ask our fellow-countrymen—because, after all, these *naturalized persons* have taken an obligation to this country—to recognize that a rule like that—I trust it will not have to be applied in many cases—is a sensible rule, laid down in order to secure that our protection from this danger shall be as complete as possible."

In my view, to found upon this brief explanation the supposed acquiescence by Parliament in the abrogation, not only of ancient and traditional rights but of a new right of civil trial specifically granted but three months before, is to commit an error which should be corrected.

The principal question, therefore, stands thus: As to its legal aspect the House of Lords will have to determine whether Regulation 14B is authorized by the statute—in its Parliamentary aspect, the records show that, in the belief that a special power was being granted to deal with naturalized persons "of hostile origin or association," Parliament concurred in an Order which is now being employed to imprison British citizens without trial. This process violates some of the fundamental laws of the Constitution, removes the safeguards of personal liberty, and revives a situation long discarded in our national history.

If any doubt remains in a reader's mind as to the extended use which is now being made by this regulation, described to Parliament by its author as being applicable to naturalized persons, the following words used by the present Home Secretary in the House of Commons on March 2nd, 1915, should instantly remove it. I invite particular attention to them, as they disclose the centre of the mischief. Mr. Samuel said: "Further, there was undoubtedly a small number—I am glad to think an exceedingly small number—of British subjects, pure-born British subjects, who were untrustworthy and who ought properly to be placed under control."

In describing this regulation on June 17th, 1915, Sir John Simon said nothing about pure-born British subjects. On March 2nd, 1916, his successor (Mr. Herbert Samuel) stretches the regulation to cover even these people, and the ambit of the Government's power is thus extended. By what authority, I ask, does Mr. Samuel determine what British citizens are "untrustworthy and ought properly to be placed under control"? No statute has taken away from the citizen his right to civil trial. On the contrary, Parliament has expressly re-granted his ancient right in respect of the very regulations under which Mr. Samuel claims to act. A regulation, now before the courts, can alone be cited for the purpose. The court's decision we must await, but when we are asked to say that Parliament knowingly set aside the Habeas Corpus Acts, the Bill of Rights, the traditional liberties of the land, and the new right it had specifically granted but three months before, some of us are asked to affirm what we cannot believe.

Burke dealt with a similar situation in 1770, and it is distressing to find that our present leaders have so far forgotten the lessons and fruits of experience as to bring about a recurrence of conditions which no statesman should provoke, even unwittingly. In a famous passage in "Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents," Burke describes a conjunction of events which bears a mournful likeness to our own day:—

"Indeed, in the situation in which we stand, with an immense revenue, an enormous debt, mighty establishments, Government itself a great banker and a great merchant, I see no other way for the preservation of a decent attention to public interest in the representatives *but the interposition of the body of the people itself*, whenever it shall appear, by some flagrant and notorious act, by some capital innovation, that these representatives are going to overleap the fences of the law and to introduce an arbitrary power. This interposition is a most unpleasant remedy. But, if it be a legal remedy, it is intended on some occasion to be used; to be used then only when it is evident that nothing else can hold the Constitution to its true principles."

The interposition of the body of the people must be secured unless the Government mend their ways and readjust their measures to accord with the spirit of the nation. Our people have given their unstinted help to the prosecution of this terrible war as fighters for the freedom which their beloved country has presented as an example to the world. Can it be supposed that in a land with our traditions of personal liberty the body of the people will be brought to concur in the curtailment of their own liberties in the pursuit of the liberties of Europe?—Yours, &c.,

LEGALIST.

The Temple. March 13th, 1916.

Letters to the Editor.

THE FUTURE OF THE FREE CHURCHES.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The proposals made at Bradford for a United Free Church and the letter of "Free Churchman" on the subject raise issues so critical and profound that one is almost oppressed into a despairing silence. As one whose name has been mentioned in connection with the subject, perhaps I may be allowed to make a few what I fear will be very provocative reflections; but now is the time for the frankest contribution of what one feels.

I am persuaded that the Free Churches will gain nothing by union if they only reinforce their opposition to the

Catholic idea of the Church and the Catholic ideal of worship. To our judgment, Romanism has failed to interpret Catholicism; the Oxford Movement in the Church of England, despite the many benefits it has brought to us all, just fails to accomplish what is needed because of its entanglement with a mechanical theory of priesthood, the retention of magical ideas in its sacraments, and its tendency towards a reactionary theology. Just because the Free Churches are free it is open to them to discover representative priesthood, mystical sacraments, and that type of theology which is interpreted throughout by the Love of God, and can be preached with passionate love to man. If we cannot reappropriate these things we shall be out forever in the barren negations of Protestantism, and we shall see more and more of our people drifting over to those strange sects which flourish on rediscovered elements of the Catholic faith torn from their context and distorted beyond recognition. We want a free Catholicism, which is nowhere to be found to-day.

But the Free Churches must be free from all alliance with the State, and every taint of party politics. The suggestion made by Mr. Shakespeare that we should call in the help of some of our leading politicians, presumably because they are politicians, is disquieting. This alliance of Church and party is worse than the alliance of Church and State, and we want neither, not only for our own sake, but also for the sake of politics. One wonders whether the Free Church support of the war would have been as whole-hearted and united if war had been declared by the Conservative Government. Especially is there a suspicion that we have limited the application of the Christian evangel and ethic to the requirements of a State at war and a popular mind inflamed by vengeance. A writer in "The Daily News" warns us that we must still alienate the thinking commercial community if we ask for lenient treatment of our enemies after the war. This is a spirit which we certainly have to watch. The Catholicism that we want back is the Catholicism of the Catacombs, at war with a deified State.

The Free Churches need to beware of popularity. If you want to win this world, you must show that you care nothing for its adulation. To make your way to the needs of man's soul you often have to blast your way past fortresses of pride and break through crusts of superficiality. This means that any Church which would truly serve humanity may have to be for a time unpopular, and therefore must be willing to be poor. We may require a ministry which is willing to face poverty for the sake of the Kingdom of God, and to seek independence by means of a self-supporting order. That means, in short, Franciscan Catholicism.

All this marks out a hard way, and we may be tempted to plan unity in opposition to the catholic idea, to support the State whatever it may demand, or in dependence upon the rich. It matters not what name we call ourselves. We shall not be the Christian Church.—Yours, &c.,

W. E. ORCHARD.

The King's Weigh House. March 15th, 1916.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Your correspondent, "Free Churchman," evidently had not the advantage of being present at the memorable assembly in Bradford on March 7th. He knows nothing of the temper and response of the audience, or he would realize that Mr. Shakespeare was not a voice crying in the wilderness to a heedless and heartless mob, but a voice, the voice of a leader, rallying his army to a new campaign.

If the Free Churches were in the moribund condition that their enemies would like to believe, such an appeal as Mr. Shakespeare's would not have been given, or, at least, it would not have been received as it was. Again, if the Free Church Council were as discredited and powerless as its busy enemies declare it to be, such a gathering as the meetings in Bradford, when the country is preoccupied with war, when the pitiless winter made travelling perilous and the streets impassable, would have been inconceivable. I have known the Council and attended its annual assembly from the beginning, and have no hesitation in saying that it is better to-day than it ever was, stronger in its organization, clearer in its aims, and pervaded by a more fervent religious spirit.

After twenty-one years of steady and persistent effort, we are summoned by a brilliant and devoted leader to carry out that practical federation which was our aim from the

beginning. I do not think the time has been lost. Through the Council the denominations have come to know each other and to respect each other. Gradually we have found each other out, and made the discovery that there are no barriers of essential belief that divide us. We know that we ought to be one. Now comes the leader to enable us to carry out the conviction which has been slowly formed.

Mr. Shakespeare has with him the leading spirits in all the denominations. They will not stand by and curiously watch him embarking on a solitary crusade; they will stand by him shoulder to shoulder, and will learn with him how his vision may be realized, how the goal may be reached.

Our task would be made much easier if we could get the sympathetic attention of such leaders of national thought as yourself. The disappointing influence of the Free Churches on the life of the country is not due to their intrinsic weakness: their influence is surprisingly great, when you note that they have none of the forces of society, wealth, or official patronage with them; but what constantly frustrates and weakens their influence is that the snobbishness which is the bane of England leads men who would stand well with the world to forsake them, and then to ignore or to denounce them. If you, sir, for example, would take the trouble to know the better side of these churches, their inward piety, their external enterprises, their amazing generosity in supporting their own work, in evangelizing the world, and in promoting all worthy public objects, and if, in consequence, you were to give the kind of attention to them that you give to other strands in the national life, we should be greatly strengthened in following the lead of our President. The wind in this country is always against us, and it is often an east wind. A breath of Favonius, a kindly spring gale, assuring us that we are part of the British people, and part of the Church of Christ, acknowledging our efforts to bring the Kingdom of God into operation here and in other parts of the world, would be so unusual that the surprise of it might carry us along to an unexpected success.—Yours, &c.,

ROBERT F. HORTON.

Chesils, Hampstead. March 15th, 1916.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—Mr. Shakespeare deserves the admiring gratitude of all who are concerned about the future of religion in the life of our nation. The first condition of any reform is such a courageous candor as he has so finely exhibited. He would be an ungenerous critic who would exult in this revelation of the decline of the Free Churches. Even were it not true that Anglicanism is in the same condition (as "Artifex" in the "Manchester Guardian" has repeatedly confessed), a sincere Anglican would recognize that England is not so rich in faith that it can afford to contemplate with complacency the passing of any form of true piety.

But while, as a Nonconformist, I welcome Mr. Shakespeare's timely warning, I must sorrowfully confess that I see no sign that Free Churchmen, as a body, have taken to heart the full meaning of the modern religious situation.

Let us be plain.

(1) I agree with the new President that denominationalism is a decaying idea. Sectarianism, if not the enemy, is, at any rate, an enemy. Now, a United Free Church would only diminish the number of sects while actually intensifying and entrenching the spirit of sectarianism, unless the inspiration of the movement be entirely free from every political and separatist animus.

(2) If Nonconformity is to save its distinctive life and virtues it must learn to see its problem in the context of the whole field of modern religious thought. It must be "born again" into the spirit of Richard Baxter's two great sermons, "The True Catholic or the Catholic Church Described," and "Catholic Unity." It must get rid once and for all of the pathetic obsession that it began in 1662, or even with Luther. To gather together a scattered number of waterlogged vessels into a grand fleet will not stop the leakage or keep a single sinking ship afloat. Something much more constructively daring and redemptively venturesome is needed, as Dr. Orchard clearly saw in his advocacy of a new and free Catholicism. We need a positive and crusading enterprise that shall have the brave heart to appropriate the unifying Catholic life of Christendom throughout all periods and all communions.

(3) The spiral ascent of history has brought us all to a point of view whence we can see with freshness of vision the peril that exists in all compromising creed-bound, dogmatic Catholicism—namely, a scribal, unyielding conservatism, which makes void the prophetic Word of God by a meticulous antiquarianism, and which shrinks from striking the note of veracity and modern conviction.

(4) Nonconformity can give to Catholicism the broad democratic faith in the present power of the living Spirit. "Would to God that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit upon them." It can convince the sticklers for "Orders" that religion and goodness do not cease to be religious and good when they do not happen to be ecclesiastically authorized. The spiritual fellowship of love and holiness is supreme; the ecclesiastical framework, though necessary for any visible church, is at best secondary, and must not be pressed to pharisaic and rigorist extremes.

(5) But before Nonconformity can do this service and restore to the ancient Catholicisms a flexible adaptiveness to the ever-living Spirit, it must first learn to take from these Catholicisms the spirit of loyalty to what is enduring and fruitful in their tradition, and thereby correct its own Protestant anarchy. In affirming, as it must, the spiritual non-mechanical view of apostolic succession it must not resort to the facile and fatal expedient of denying the reality of Catholic continuity and solidarity. It can do this only by sharing in personal life the Catholic character and type of piety, by bringing into its worship the symbolisms which it too hastily and petulantly discarded, by recovering the Catholic atmosphere of devotion, by giving its adoration, not to the too conspicuous man in the pulpit (the worst kind of priesthood), but to the Unseen Real Presence witnessed by the altar, and by proving the efficacy and fruitfulness of its own Sacraments, which are none the less the Sacraments of the One Undivided Catholic Life, because independent of any tactual or magical theory of continuity. To sum up, neither episcopacy nor anti-episcopacy, neither Presbyterianism nor Methodism nor Congregationalism, availeth anything but a new creation.

The only hope of a dying Nonconformity and of a stiff and punctilious ecclesiasticism is, I believe, in their regeneration and advance into a Free Catholicism.—Yours, &c.,

J. M. LLOYD THOMAS
(Editor of the "Free Catholic").

The Old Meeting Church, Birmingham.
March 13th, 1916.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The Rev. J. H. Shakespeare's call for the grouping of the Free Churches in one United Free Church of England is a living word. It may mark a fresh departure in the religious history of Britain. To the mind of many, the initial merit of the proposal is its attempt to draw together the spiritual resources of the Free Churches for the immense adventure of establishing a new and holier civilization after the war. For a task so colossal we must needs prepare on a scale to match the enterprise. Journalists have lightly used the great word of the Book of the Revelation to describe the battles of the present European struggle; but "the war of the great day of God the Almighty," is a conflict not of flesh and blood, but of carnal lusts against spiritual sovereignties, and the real Har-Magedon may be waiting us when peace returns to earth. The sacrificial impulses and the savage mercilessness so strangely yoked in life to-day will inevitably fall apart then. The war beyond this war will be fought out in English character, in every sphere of English life. Unity of purpose among the Christian communities will be supremely necessary, and therein lies the value of Mr. Shakespeare's assertion: "The principle of division has spent its force; the era of union must begin."

From the friendly standpoint of one who welcomes the call, may I ask a fair and patient exploration of what should be a guiding factor in a movement toward union? Denominationalism, as we know it in England, is not primarily the result of freakishness in religion, nor of the contentious temper of religious leaders. Each great denomination has sprung from a new exercise of the Christian right to affirm a distinctive spiritual truth. The roots of the Free Churches

lie deep in the great thoughts and deeds of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the Puritan movement and in the Methodist revival. What Barrowe, Greenwood, Penry, and other early "Independents" affirmed was the right of individual conscience to fashion worship and direct conduct; what George Fox saw was an inner light leading him and the creation through days of civil strife in ways of love; what the Wesleys re-discovered was the power of God to set man free from "evil in every kind," to do "good of every possible sort."

The resolute affirmation, and, still more, the resolute application, of these truths threw leaders and followers into antagonism to the conventional religion of their day; but out of that antagonism sprang moral energies which laid the foundations of modern liberty and philanthropy. To the conservative mind these stirrings of soul threatened the pillars of Church and of State. History has done those primitive Free Churchmen fuller justice. Milton's doctrine that strong ferments of religious thought "betoken us not degenerated nor drooping to a fatal decay, but casting off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption to outlive these pangs and wax young again," has won the assent of later days.

"To wax young again" is the need of every age, and chiefly of our time. Therefore, the one price modern Free Churchmen dare not pay for unity is the sacrifice of this power "to cast off the old and wrinkled skin of corruption." The right to refuse to conform to convention and tradition is our pearl of great price. That we may not barter. I would contend that days are coming when the hopes of civilization may centre in the exercise of this right. Who can watch, for instance, the proceedings of the tribunals set up under the Military Service Act without perceiving that we live in times when the rights of individual conscience are admitted in form and denied in fact? Who can note the tone and temper of wide sections of the press without discerning that martial law is shaping thought as well as habit, and that spiritual perceptions and public liberties which seemed beyond challenge are dismissed with a sneer and a gibe? The peril is here. The hour of protest will come. The day may not be far distant when a man may have to dare much "to satisfy his duties and his conscience."

Mr. Shakespeare is on sure ground in pleading that the Free Churches should federate. The Christian crusades of the morrow demand that we should plan co-operation to-day. Christians of all schools have, in Cromwell's noble words, "the same spirit of faith and prayer; the same Presence and answer." That is the life-sap of unity. Unity is a spirit not a shape. It can reform the framework of Churches and of States, but no external change can be its creator. It is from above, and because from above it brings with it the eternal right to rebel against wrong. To be inclusive of the peculiar witness of the Free Churches, any new expression of unity must treasure, and not suppress, the spirit of revolt against the enemies of the soul—formalism, tyranny, and the lusts of the flesh. A mere massing of numbers would be futile. A mobilization against evil might go far to recreate England.—Yours, &c.,

HENRY CARTER.

Harrow, March 14th, 1916.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—To the full measure of my opportunity as a Wesleyan minister I have loved and labored for the Free Church Council from its inception until now. And now I am disappointed. Not with Mr. Shakespeare's dreams of the future or with his strictures of the present situation, but that still more of the way of the future is likely to be a way of talk instead of acts. The question of Nonconformist overlapping is ripe for treatment. Mr. Shakespeare's address bore that witness. The position would have justified, on the part of the Bradford assembly, an immediate and definite remedial scheme. Instead of that, judging from Press reports, the various churches are to be asked to consider the new President's address as a whole. It supplies debating points for another six years. Why not concentrate upon the one admitted evil? Something practical could be done, and done soon, I feel sure. Meanwhile, the necessary consultations between representatives of the various churches would produce that better mutual understanding which must exist before any scheme of amalgamation or federation for purposes

of common spiritual advance can be brought within the range of practical politics.—Yours, &c.,

J. EDWARD HARLOW.

90, Cheriton Road, Folkestone.

March 14th, 1916.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—As a Scottish Presbyterian, I am interested in the union of the Free Churches of England. A federation would solve the problem of unnecessary numbers of churches in towns and villages, but it is no solution for the real problem—the lack of interest of the people either in church or chapel. There is a tendency to scoff at what is called sectarianism, but this living interest in a small body is better than the feeling of isolation membership of a large church such as the Church of England or the Roman Catholic Church begets. Further, the churches are over-organized, and, in my opinion, are wasting their power and energies by over-organization, which produces so few results; genuine workers faint at the meagre return. What is needed is a restatement of the Christian faith which people will believe in, and not assent to, as at present. The average church member at present goes to church as a duty or the best possible thing in the circumstances, but not because he really believes. He does not disbelieve, but he cannot reconcile modern knowledge with Church doctrines. This is Mr. Shakespeare's problem; not a mechanical binding together of churches, but a reorganization of Christian thinking, which, when accomplished, will scrap half the organizations in our churches, and by its living power accomplish what churchmen have been so laboriously trying to do by machinery. The clergy, however, must change. This leading on the war is quite contrary to the teaching of Christianity, and shows how far they have departed from the central truths of Christianity. I am no pro-German, but the Church can never glorify war, even when it is righteous.—Yours, &c.,

SCOT.

March 14th, 1916.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—The letter of "Free Churchman" opens old sores: I hope that it may lead to the closing of them once for all. The National Free Church Council cannot succeed, because it is founded upon tests, and these tests are not vivid, genuine ones, but are a kind of average doctrine called Evangelicalism. At the inception of the Council we were busy at Hampstead inviting all the Free Churches under the bond of lovers of Christ alone. Dr. Herford and his people joined us, but we were promptly excommunicated by the Council, as all the world knows.

I have always urged that followers of Christ would do well rather to encourage thinking, and, therefore, difference of opinion, upon theological matters, so that we may all be searching after God, if haply we may find Him. But we may all take Jesus as our Head, whatever the theologies may say; and, for myself, while I am more than ever determined that no one shall interfere with my direct approach to God, I am, at the same time, less inclined than ever to part with our Lord from among the sons of men. The exact or real fact is known only to God. But the churches will help best to further what we call the coming of the Kingdom if we unite to work more earnestly because we claim to, and, indeed, must, think only each one for himself.—Yours, &c.,

GEO. RADFORD.

12, York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C.

March 13th, 1916.

QUAKERS AND CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—I regret to trespass again upon your courtesy, but perhaps you will allow me to say a word in answer to Mr. Russell Frayling.

Mr. Frayling does not wish to enter into a controversy regarding "conscientious objectors," but surely Mr. Frayling must see that the objection of the body which he represents to taking part in any form of military service makes it difficult for that body to claim a prominent part in settling the terms of peace without—well, effrontery is the word which naturally arises in one's mind. It is as if the neutrals

were to claim to settle the war over the heads or, perhaps more truthfully, behind the backs, of the belligerents.

Mr. Frayling says the protests show that he and his friends have a good case. I am sure he makes this amazing statement in good faith. I am myself convinced that the Pacifists, wrapped in the conscious superiority of their one virtue, if it be a virtue, have lost all capacity to see disagreeable facts. But the facts are there all the same.

What are they? Before the war the Pacifists, Friends, and others joined in the task of weakening the Army and the Navy, assuring us of perpetual peace. The country is now fighting for its life, but the Pacifists can take no part, because of their consciences. But while the manhood of England is fighting in the trenches, they devote themselves to working up an agitation to betray what those men are dying to save, and are again striving to rest the safety of the country on paper safeguards, which have proved, as we know, at a cost of blood and tears and treasure that can never be estimated, utterly worthless. And if this worthlessness is again demonstrated, it will be the other men who will go to the front and die while the Pacifist and his conscience remain at home. For it is always the "other men" who pay for the Pacifists' mistakes.

I know this is a harsh way of putting the position; but I ask Mr. Frayling and his friends to consider whether it is not essentially true. For the Friends do not take up the attitude of the Tolstoyans. The latter may be impracticable, but at least they are consistent. The Friends follow what they term the "Early Christian" view of war, but not the "Early Christian" view of private property; they take full advantage of our competitive commercial system; in case of a private injury they use without scruple the civil and criminal courts, which are based on force; only in the case of a national injury do they suddenly see the virtue of "turning the other cheek."

What, it may be asked, is the importance of the meetings at Devonshire House? The people know perfectly well how, for various reasons it is hardly necessary to detail, the Pacifist section has exercised in the past a political influence out of all proportion to its numbers. They know well how a society like the Union of Democratic Control, for all its affected hatred of secret diplomacy, would, through certain prominent politicians in its ranks, gladly pull any wires in favor of a premature and inconclusive peace; they know how these "educational" meetings are meant to prepare for such a peace; and they are demanding that the country and, above all, the soldiers and sailors, shall not be treacherously betrayed. One is glad, indeed, to know that many distinguished members of the Society of Friends are themselves protesting against the Pacifist activities of a section such as those at Devonshire House; and in a recent letter to "The Times" have declared their readiness to stand by their country in this hour of peril.

May I, in conclusion, express my regret to Mr. Alexander for misunderstanding his letter? But I certainly thought it was directed to show that patriotism was not a Christian virtue or one recognized by our Lord. I am glad this was not so, as Mr. Alexander's position becomes much more human, if considerably less logical. I may, perhaps, remind him that passive endurance of evil is not the lesson to be learned from the incident of Christ and the money changers, nor a total condemnation of military service from the healing of the centurion's servant.—Yours, &c.,

GEORGE MARGILL, Secretary.

The Anti-German Union, 346, Strand, W.C.

March 13th, 1916.

FARMERS AND THE WAR.

To the Editor of *THE NATION*.

SIR,—I notice that in an article "To Farmer Bull," in your issue of March 11th, you make a few remarks not very complimentary to the English farmer. You say, "It is of the utmost importance that we should continue to produce as much food as possible at home." That, I think, we all admit, but you go on to compare the output of the farm during the war with the output of the munition factory, and try to show that, whereas the factory is turning out far more munitions than it did before the war, the farm is only yielding a normal crop. But is it fair to compare the two? The factory has, with the assistance of the Government, been able to command the services of an increasing

number of skilled mechanics and workmen, to increase the output of munitions; the farm has had in many cases 50 per cent. of its best skilled laborers enlisted in the Army, and farmers have been told that they must utilize the services of inexperienced women and girls to take the places of these skilled men who have been used to agricultural work all their lives.

On my own farm of about five hundred acres, twelve of my men have joined the Army, and four more married men expect to be called up very soon. In normal times in this district farmers always employ women on the land for about eight months of the year, potato planting and picking, pea-picking, hoeing, haymaking, harvesting, &c., and nearly every woman who can work on the land does so in normal times. Can you expect farmers to import women into their districts, with no previous knowledge of agriculture, to take the places of our skilled men, and at the same time expect them to double their crops?

You go on to say that "not a single new acre has been brought under tillage." As a matter of fact, thousands of acres of grassland have been converted into arable within thirty miles of here within the last ten years, to grow potatoes, vegetables, fruit, and corn, and a very considerable acreage has been ploughed up during the war.

You also say that a very little thinking would enable a farmer to increase the yield of wheat from fifty to sixty bushels per acre. My reply to that is that it was impossible for an average farmer to produce ten bushels per acre more wheat this year than any previous year, for the simple reason that we had a very wet July, the corn did not ripen to perfection, and consequently the yield of wheat this year in this district is less than an average. I will also challenge any farmer, from any Free Trade or any other country, to grow 60 bushels of wheat per acre on any farm in the county of Norfolk for two years in succession.—Yours, &c.,

FARMER BULL.

Terrington St. Clement, King's Lynn.

March 13th, 1916.

ENGLAND AND THE ALLIES.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—IN THE NATION for February 12th appeared a letter, signed A. Hamon, in which the following statement occurs:—

"There exists, for instance, in a Parisian 'lycée,' frequented by the aristocracy and upper middle-class, an anti-English association! And these believe, as firm as a rock, that England wishes to keep Calais! This is the result of an underhand German propaganda, and of an obvious propaganda of the Catholic and Royalist and anti-democratic circles."

This remarkable statement naturally found its way into the German press (see the "Frankfurter Zeitung," February 20th), and thence into the French.

In the interest, not so much of the Alliance, which calumny is now powerless to injure, but of mere truth, will you allow me, sir, to challenge M. Hamon—who writes from a London club—to substantiate his assertions, and to warn him that, if he fails to prove what he has alleged, he will fall, among honest Englishmen, into the gravest suspicion of being himself a party to an underhand German propaganda—or, at the least, of being one of those Frenchmen, fortunately rare, who love their country a good deal less than they hate their political opponents but fellow-countrymen of "the Catholic and Royalist and anti-Democratic circles"?

I think I may assure M. Hamon that his answer will have in France, as well as in England, the publicity it deserves.—Yours, &c.,

F. Y. ECCLES.

2, Walton Street, Oxford. March 14th, 1916.

EDUCATION AND SEX.

To the Editor of THE NATION.

SIR,—The Report of the Royal Commission on Venereal Diseases has roused public opinion, not only to a fuller recognition of the ravages of the so-called "secret scourge," but also to the necessity of striking at the root of the evil by means of education. Nor, happily, do the Commissioners limit the need for instruction to the adult, or even the adolescent. They expressly state that "the foundation

should be laid in the elementary schools for fuller instruction and more effective help during the critical years of adolescence.

As the head mistress of a large girls' elementary school, who, having felt the impracticability of dealing adequately with individual girls leaving school, has given definite sex-instruction to the children in the natural and gradual development of their ordinary work, I can testify to several conclusions reached.

(1) That it is possible to create a reverential atmosphere with regard to all the workings of the human body.

(2) That so far from morbid or unhealthy feelings being stimulated by sex-teaching, the simple, straightforward talks on matters that are vital to the child's present and future welfare allay its natural curiosity without arousing a desire to probe into unnecessary physiological details.

(3) That unseemly gossip does not follow such lessons when the matter is dealt with in a tactful way by an experienced and thoroughly well-trained teacher.

This, of course, brings us face to face with the necessity referred to in the Report of giving careful attention "in the training colleges to all those who enter the teaching profession to deal with these subjects." There should be no training college, either for men or women teachers, that does not make adequate provision for such training. This is not merely an academic question, but a most practical and essential method of safeguarding the health, both physical and moral, of our nation. May the day speedily come when a true patriotism inspires our educational authorities to introduce thorough and systematic work of this kind in the interests of the race!—Yours, &c.,

THEODORA BONWICK, B.A.

28, Weston Park, Crouch End, N.

March 14th, 1916.

HABEAS CORPUS DEFENCE FUND.

WE have to acknowledge, with thanks, the following further sums received for this fund:—

	£	s.	d.
Already acknowledged	226	8	0
H. M. A.	1	0	0
W. S. Aldis, Esq.	1	1	0
B. L. H.	0	10	0
C. L.	3	0	0
L. W. P. L.	1	1	0
Geoffrey Le M. Mander, Esq.	1	1	0
Mr. and Mrs. F. E. P.	3	0	0
Samuel Price, Esq.	1	0	0
William C. Stapledon, Esq.	2	2	0
	£240	3	0

Poetry.

TENANTS.

SUDDENLY, out of dark and leafy ways,
We came upon the little house asleep
In cold, blind stillness, shadowless and deep,
In the white magic of the full moon-blaze:
Strangers without the gate, we stood agaze,
Fearful to break that quiet, and to creep
Into the home that had been ours to keep
Through a long year of happy nights and days.

So unfamiliar in the white moon-gleam,
So old and ghostly, like a house of dream,
It stood, that over us there stole the dread
That even as we watched it, side by side,
The ghosts of lovers, who had lived and died
Within its walls, were sleeping in our bed.

WILFRID WILSON GIBSON.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Shakespeare's Industry." By Mrs. C. C. Stopes. (Bell. 7s. 6d. net.)
 "German Atrocities: An Official Investigation." By J. H. Morgan. (Fisher Unwin. 2s. net.)
 "Germany Before the War." By Baron Beyens. (Nelson. 3s. 6d. net.)
 "The Ravings of a Renegade." Essays by Houston Stewart Chamberlain. (Jarrold. 2s. 6d. net.)
 "A Great Success." By Mrs. Humphry Ward. (Smith, Elder. 3s. 6d. net.)

THANKS to the shilling reprint issued by Messrs. Cassell, I have just read Mr. Wells's "An Englishman Looks at the World," first published in the early part of 1914, and I hasten to recommend everybody who has not yet read the book to follow my example. If I were a public-spirited millionaire, one of my activities would certainly be to sign a cheque for £2,500 (less the discount on a wholesale order), so that not one of the fifty thousand people who—on Mr. Wells's own estimate—make up the British reading and thinking public, need be without a copy. I would do it for two reasons. In the first place, the book is a document of singular value. It shows us how the political and social problems of the England of the year before the war impressed a particularly clear-sighted, vital, combative, and energetic mind. And in the second place it differs from most contemporary surveys of those problems. Nearly all the books that deal with them have to-day an outworn air, an appearance of discussing things that no longer matter. One even becomes impatient of them and of their authors, so great has been the change in values that the war has brought to most people. Mr. Wells's, on the contrary, is as much alive, except for a few paragraphs, as if it had been written yesterday.

WHAT makes Mr. Wells's thinking so tonic and so useful at the present time is that he has an unbounded faith in ideas; he is capable, to use Matthew Arnold's phrase, of really fine returns upon himself, and his criticism is inspiring as well as destructive. He has no superstitious worship of consistency, that virtue of feeble minds, and though he calls himself a Socialist, he gives a meaning of his own to that blurred and ambiguous word. The two thoughts on which he insists over and over again in "An Englishman Looks at the World," and which he applies in a score of different forms, are, first, that the day has gone by for the time-honored English policy of "muddling through"; and, second, that the future is made by the present, and a knowledge of it is not only possible, but far more important than any study of the past. In Mr. Wells's examinations of future possibilities I find a glow and a warmth which I sometimes miss in his novels. It seems as if he put more of his heart as well as of his brain into such speculations.

In his belief in the power of ideas and his exhortations to his fellow-countrymen to make themselves acquainted with the best that has been known and thought in the world, Mr. Wells continues the propaganda which Matthew Arnold began. I remember that an American writer, Mr. V. W. Brooks, has suggested that in the future Mr. Wells may be thought of as having played towards his own generation a part very similar to that played by Matthew Arnold towards his. The comparison is surprising, but I am not sure there is not something in it. If so, "An Englishman Looks at the World" will be regarded as the counterpart of "Friendship's Garland." There is the same dissatisfaction with things as they are, the same discontent with our politicians and our schoolmasters, the same desire to change the whole frame of the English mind rather than to preach any definite intellectual or economic doctrine. "We North-Germans," says Arnold's Arminius, "have worked for 'Geist' in our way, by loving knowledge, by having the best-educated middle and lower class in the world. France has 'Geist' in her democracy, and Prussia in her education. Where have you got it?—got it as a force, I mean, and not only in a

few scattered individuals." "I have watched," says Mr. Wells, "a great deal of patriotic effort during the last decade . . . and I am deeply impressed, not, indeed, by any effect of lethargy, but by the second-rate quality and the shortness and weakness of aim in very much that has been done. I miss that sharply critical imaginativeness which distinguishes all excellent work, which cannot be absent altogether if any achievement is to endure."

Or compare these two passages, the first from Matthew Arnold, in the words of his friend, Arminius:—

"Then you may get involved in war, and you imagine that you cannot but make war well by dint of being so very rich. . . . But authority and victory over people who are in earnest means being in earnest oneself, and your Philistines are not in earnest; they have no idea great enough to make them so. They want to be important and authoritative; they want to enforce peace and curb the ambitious; they want to drive a roaring trade; they want to know and criticize all that is being done; they want no restriction on their personal liberty, no interference with their usual way of going on; they want all these incompatible things equally and at once, because they have no idea deep and strong enough to subordinate everything else to itself."

And this is from Mr. Wells:—

"It is possible, of course, to wake up in various ways. . . . All patriotic vehemence does not serve one's country. Exertion is a more dangerous thing than inaction, and the essence of success is in ability to develop these qualities which make action effective, and without which strenuousness is merely a clumsy and noisy protest against inevitable defeat. These necessary qualities, without which no community can hope for pre-eminence to-day, are a passion for fine and brilliant achievement, relentless veracity of thought and method, and richly imaginative fearlessness of enterprise. Have we English these qualities, and are we doing our utmost to select and develop them?"

Is not this in the Arnoldian tradition, extending even to what an unfriendly critic might call the indefiniteness and lack of precision in the ideal preached by both?

MATTHEW ARNOLD's skill in inventing or applying labels is not shared by Mr. Wells. He has nothing to compare with the classification into barbarians, Philistines, and populace, which has taken a firm grip on the language, though his invention of "God-Sakers" was highly successful. His Conservators, Planless Progressives, and Constructors is a useful division, but it cannot compare with Arnold's. On the other hand, Mr. Wells's method of working for the social and political reconstruction which is to distinguish the great State of the future is one that would have Arnold's unqualified approval:—

"Its broad lines have to be thought out by thousands of minds, and it is for that reason that I have put the stress upon our need of discussion, of a wide, intellectual and moral stimulation, of a stirring up in our schools and pulpits, and upon the modernization and clarification of what should be the deliberate assembly of the nation."

It is possible to carry the comparison between Mr. Wells and Matthew Arnold a step further. To Matthew Arnold, literature was, at bottom, a criticism of life, and conduct was three-fourths of life. In a suggestive essay on "The Contemporary Novel" Mr. Wells claims that "the novelist is going to be the most potent of artists, because he is going 'to present conduct, devise beautiful conduct, discuss conduct, analyze conduct, suggest conduct, illuminate it through and through.'"

"The novel," Mr. Wells says, "is to be the social mediator, the vehicle of understanding, the instrument of self-examination, the parade of morals and the exchange of manners, the factory of customs, the criticism of laws and institutions and of social dogmas and ideas."

Henry James lamented, with even more than his usual number of parenthetical qualifications and circumlocutory additions and asides, the lack of economy and what he called "composition" in Mr. Wells's novels. But he declared that Mr. Wells possesses "an extraordinary mass of gathered and assimilated knowledge more remarkable than any teller of 'mere' tales, with the possible exception of Balzac, has been able to draw upon." And that is far from being the least necessary part of the equipment of a critic of life.

PENGUIN.

Reviews.

AN IRISH PROPHET.

"Imaginations and Reveries." By A. E. (Maunsel. 6s.)
 "A. E. (George W. Russell): A Study of a Man and a Nation." By DARRELL FIGGIS. (Maunsel. 2s. 6d. net.)

A. E. is generally regarded as an Irish prophet. He is in danger—in this country, at least—of suffering the common fate of the modern prophet, and being praised to death. There are among men who use fiery speech few in these days so much honored and so little damned. It is not that he is given to speaking soothing and gracious things. He can denounce his fellows like a Jonah when he has a mind to it. His prose especially is, like so much good prophet's prose, only less apt to fly into a passion of denunciation than into a passion of ideals. He broods calm as a seer in his verse and on his canvases. His prose is often the prose of a controversialist with a lash. Everyone remembers his punishment of Mr. Kipling in an "open letter" which he contributed to the "Daily News" during the Ulster crisis, after Mr. Kipling had written a nervous, old-maidish poem about "hells let loose by Rome"—we quote the phrase from memory. That open letter is reprinted here under the title "Ulster"; if Mr. Kipling is sensitive, its blazing nobleness must have disturbed him beyond any other criticism that was ever directed against his work. But A. E. is as bold in prophesying against the country he loves as against the poet who maligned it. In the essay called "Religion and Love" he charges Ireland with sin with an anger possible only to a lover or an enemy. "The home life in Ireland," he declares, "is probably more squalid than with any other people equally prosperous in Europe. The children, begotten without love, fill more and more the teeming asylums." We quote this not because we entirely agree with it—we doubt whether lovelessness is responsible for nearly as many admissions into Irish asylums as malnutrition and tea—but as an example of A. E.'s preference of the home truth to the sentimental lie in dealing with Irish or any other questions. His scorn of the "made marriage" and the haggling over dowries leads him even to belittle the reputation of Irishwomen for virtue. "A girl, without repining," he says, "will follow her four-legged dowry to the house of a man she may never have spoken twenty words to before her marriage. We praise our women for their virtue, but the general acceptance of the marriage as arranged shows so unemotional, so undesirable a temperament, that it is not to be wondered at. One wonders was there temptation." And he doubts not only whether Irish women are virtuous in any fine sense, but whether the Irish people as a whole deserve their reputation for being a religious and spiritual race. "It is," he writes,—

"the essentially irreligious spirit of Ireland which has come to regard love as an unnecessary emotion and the mingling of the sexes as dangerous. For it is a curious thing that, while we commonly regard ourselves as the most religious people in Europe, the reverse is probably true. The country which has never produced spiritual thinkers or religious teachers of whom men have heard, if we except Berkeley and perhaps the remote Johannes Scotus Erigena, cannot pride itself on its spiritual achievement."

And in the end we are left with the damnation of contemporary Ireland in the sentence:—

"Dante had a place in his Inferno for the joyless souls, and if his conception be true, the population of that circle will be largely modern Irish."

Like many tempestuous prophets, however, A. E. will not permit other people to damn where he himself damns. We have mentioned already his castigation of Mr. Kipling. He is equally at odds with the realists of the Abbey Theatre who dwell with too loving an insistence on the vices of Ireland. In a noble essay, entitled "Ideals of the New Rural Society," he writes:—

"Ireland is a horribly melancholy and cynical country. Our literary men and poets, who ought to give us courage, have taken to writing about the Irish as a people who 'went forth to battle, but always fell,' sentimentalizing over incompetence instead of invigorating us and liberating us and directing our energies. We have developed a new and clever school of Irish dramatists who say they are holding the mirror up to Irish peasant nature; but they reflect nothing but decadence. They delight in the broken lights of

sincerity, the ruffian who beats his wife, the weakling who is unfortunate in love and who goes and drinks himself to death, while the little, decaying country towns are seized with avidity and exhibited on the stage in every kind of decay and human futility and meanness."

Considering A. E.'s own indictments of Irish life, this seems a little unfair. One is also inclined to ask him how he, who is so suspicious of ethical intrusions into the art of painting, can justify himself for demanding these intrusions into the art of literature. Surely the tragic figuration of suffering in Mr. Lennox Robinson's play, "The Cross-Roads"—the play concerning the wife-beater which A. E. attacks in the passage we have quoted—is a legitimate and even noble, aim in imaginative literature. One feels that Mr. Robinson's sunless realism is the creature, not of intellectual malice, but of imaginative comprehension and pity. A. E.'s theory of literature, however, will not allow any trafficking with ignoble types. His theory of painting is as unethical as Whistler's: his literary creed is nearer Tolstoy's. In his essay, "Nationality and Cosmopolitanism," he seems to hope for the coming of an Irish literature which will hold up heroic types for the imitation of the people. "The literature of a people," he believes, "is for ever creating a new soul among its people," and he sees no chance of any good thing coming to Ireland from the pursuit of decadent European models, which only disclose "the old wolfish lust, hiding itself beneath the golden fleece of the spirit." That sentence, however, is a protest not against Mr. Robinson but against Mr. Yeats, who wrote "The Autumn of the Body" to recommend French examples to the Irish. A. E. will go to school neither to French nor to English literature—at least, so far as he desires a literature of heroic types. As for English literature, he writes:—

"English literature has always been more sympathetic with actual beings than with ideal types, and cannot help us much. A man who loves Dickens, for example, may prove to have a great tolerance for the grotesque characters which are the outcome of the social order in England, but he will not be assisted in the conception of a higher humanity; and this is true of very many English writers who lack a fundamental philosophy, and are content to take man as he seems to be for the moment rather than as the pilgrim of eternity—as one who is flesh to-day but who may hereafter prove divine, and who may shine at last like the stars of morning, triumphant among the sons of God."

That passage in a measure implies a criticism of A. E. as well as of Dickens. His own art is inhabited by divine thoughts instead of human beings. We mean that, whether in his lyrics or his landscapes, it is the divine rather than the human interests which predominate. He is too much of a visionary to be content with the humors and observations of the realist.

At the same time, it is less the literary critic that speaks in these sentences than the builder and maker of the Golden Age in Ireland. A. E. is a patriot who, amid all his indignation, dreams dreams of Ireland such as Blake dreamed of England. He wishes to see the four corners of the City of God established among Irish country places. He prophesies the building of a new civilization there based on the co-operative idea. Few voices so eloquent in the field of social prophecy have been heard since Mazzini's and Ruskin's. He summons Irishmen not to middle-class success but to the politics of inspiration. "The countryside in Ireland," he declares,—

"could blossom into as much beauty as the hillsides in medieval Italy if we could but get rid of our self-mistrust. We have all that any race ever had to inspire them, the heavens overhead, the earth underneath, and the breath of life in our nostrils. I would like to exile the man who would set limits to what we can do, who would take the crown and sceptre from the human will, and say, marking out some petty enterprise as the limit: 'Thus far can we go and no farther, and here shall our life be stayed.'"

A tall order, one may say in a vulgar phrase, for a writer who preaches from week to week as A. E. does, a gospel of the turnip and an apocalypse of eggs. For who does not know that, besides poet and painter, A. E. is the editor of an agricultural paper, "The Irish Homestead"? But is not the country to be envied in which a hot-gospeller of eggs and turnips can summon his fellows to the Promised Land in accents like these:—

"We in Ireland should not live only from day to day, for the day only, like the beasts in the field, but should think of where all this long cavalcade of the Gael is tending,

and how and in what manner their tents will be pitched in the evening of their generation. A national purpose is the most unconquerable and victorious of all things on earth. It can raise up Babylon from the sands of the desert, and make imperial civilizations spring from a score of huts, and after it has wrought its will it can leave monuments that seem as everlasting a portion of nature as the rocks. The Pyramids and the Sphinx on the sands of Egypt have seemed to humanity for centuries as much a portion of nature as Errigal, or Benbulbin, or Slieve Gullion, has seemed a portion of nature to our eyes in Ireland."

"Imaginations and Reveries," it should be said, is not all in this vein. It is an omniumgatherum of A. E.'s articles and sketches, critical and imaginative, artistic and economic, and even includes his prose play, "Deirdre." It does not bear the stamp of his genius so indubitably as the "Collected Poems," published a year or two ago. None the less, it is the book of a great man, whether he writes on Mr. Yeats or G. F. Watts, on "The Hero in Man" or on rural society. How comprehending an art-critic he can be when he chooses is revealed in one or two passages of his lecture on Watts. For instance:—

"I might say that no artist of equal genius ever painted pictures and brought so little fresh observation into his art except, perhaps, Burne-Jones. Both these artists seem to have a secret and refined sympathy with Fuseli's famous outburst: 'Damn Nature; she always puts me out!'"

And again, in writing of Watts:—

"In his color he always seems to me to be second-hand, as if the bloom and freshness of his paint had worn off through previous use by other artists. It seemed to be a necessity of his curiously intellectual art that only traditional colors and forms should be employed, and it is only rarely that we get the shock of a new creation and absolutely original design, as in the Orpheus, where the passionate figure turns to hold what is already a vanishing shadow."

Mr. Figgis's book on A. E. scarcely tells us as much as we would like to know about the man or his work. One wishes Mr. Figgis had kept ruthlessly persistent in his task as a portrait-painter; he has written a pamphlet round A. E. rather than a biographical and interpretative study. One would have liked a more simple prose to bring the soaring speech of A. E. within the grasp of common mortals. One of the most interesting facts related by Mr. Figgis concerns A. E.'s pen-name. "Wanting at one time a pen-name, he subscribed himself as ÆON. His penmanship not at all times being of the legiblest, the printer deciphered the first diphthong and set a query for the rest; whereupon the writer, in his proof-sheets, stroked out the query and stood by the diphthong." We are also told that A. E. confesses that "between the ages of eighteen and thirty he hardly so much as read a newspaper." One would have been glad of a greater number of concrete, if apparently insignificant, facts of this kind. Mr. Figgis, however, appears to have been even more anxious to write a book about Ireland than a book about A. E. That his book is full of an ardent and idea'd passion for his country is his praise as an idealist if not as a biographer.

A NATIONAL HISTORY OF FRANCE.

"The Century of the Renaissance." By LOUIS BATIFFOL. With an Introduction by J. E. C. BODLEY. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.)

"In the keener enjoyment of life," writes Mr. Bodley, "there is no pursuit so profitable and so easy as the familiar study of French history." The sentence has a pleasantly old-fashioned ring. The modern conscience has made of history a serious discipline. It is good to be reminded of the more natural way of regarding it. We have allowed ourselves to be a little intimidated by the severe persons who pillage archives, disdain the more readable of the ancient authorities, and spin their theories of the evolution of culture. The natural man, in spite of them, still turns to history for "keen enjoyment," and when he thinks of France, he praises the race that invented the writing of memoirs. Mr. Bodley goes on to remind us that we must also read it, if we would "understand allusions" in general literature; and, by way of illustrating his point, he writes some pages of dazzling erudition which link the place-names of the battles and trenches of to-day with the storied past of France. If enjoyment is not enough, there are even solid grounds than this for a study of French history.

For at least two centuries it makes the chief and incomparably the most brilliant chapter in the general history of civilization, and without a knowledge of it Europe would rest for us on unseen foundations. It is equally true, and another phase of the same fact, that our own English history cannot be fully understood in isolation. We have stepped in this war boldly and finally out of our cherished insularity and taken our place in the Continental system. The reaction on our reading and our studies is already marked. If we are to act as good Europeans, we must make ourselves at home in the past as well as the present of the Continent in whose destinies we are involved. But we are reluctant to quit the argument from enjoyment. There is no other land in Europe whose history can show the same wealth of adventure and romance, the same inexhaustible vitality of daring, in thought and deed, the same passionate extremes of obedience and revolt, a portrait-gallery so dazzling, or a fuller golden book of chivalrous deeds. One quarter of a century from this great record is familiar ground to most English readers, but the ample centuries before the Revolution are less frequented territory, and it is strange that no English historian of the first rank has made it his own province.

There is something to be said on both sides of the question, whether one would prefer to read the history of a great neighbor with the eyes of its own scholars or with the aid of our own. Mr. Bodley reminds us how sedulously the French academic tradition fosters a high standard in the writing of history, not merely by judgments and authoritative criticism, but by ample endowments and rewards. The chances are that nothing nearly so excellent would be likely to emerge from English studies. If we miss the special focus, the conscious interpretation, which would give its value to a similar series by competent English scholars, we gain, on the other hand, a tone and atmosphere which display the facts in their natural illumination. This is not merely the history of France. It is this history as Frenchmen write it, for Frenchmen. The plan of the work suggests a vista, in which the remoter past is seen in a diminishing perspective. One volume will cover the whole Middle Ages. The detailed narrative runs in the present volume from the death of Louis XI. to the murder of Henry IV. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries have each a separate volume. Then come a whole volume devoted to the Revolution and another to Napoleon's career.

M. Batiffol has an entrancing subject in the sixteenth century. There is movement enough in the Italian wars, and tragedy too much in the struggles of religion. The portrait painter is doubly fortunate who, when he has shown his skill on the brilliant, unlucky figure of Francis, can complete his book with the great career of Henry IV. It is as a portrait-painter that M. Batiffol excels; and his sketches of the minor and less admirable persons of his period are often as brilliant and living as his "full-lengths" of the heroes. With this art at his command, he is able to present the history of the Valois kings with a sort of personal intimacy. He understands their temperament and physique, and he makes their reigns a play of character. He varies his scale skilfully and well, dealing rather briefly with such barren episodes as the Italian Wars, to expand in a spirited and moving narrative such moving human incidents as the captivity of Francis or the murder of the Guises. He rarely obtrudes a commentary, but there is a sympathetic note of patriotic feeling when he deals with the completion of the French Fatherland by the acquisition of Verdun and Toul. This history may seem to a democratic reader rather too exclusively busied with the doings of princes and captains, but it is hardly possible to write the annals of an absolute monarchy on any other plan. We gain by this method at least a unity of view and a directness and simplicity of narrative. We miss the broader handling of the views and interests of great masses of men who had a will of their own, only when we reach the wars of the Huguenots and the League. M. Batiffol is a little inclined to regard these rebels simply as men who were distracting the kingdom and presenting a baffling problem to the Crown.

This skilful and readable book has also the merit of fairness and objectivity. It is, perhaps, just because he regards the wars of religion primarily from the standpoint

of the unity of the State which they threatened, that M. Batiffol escapes any suspicion of partisanship. There is really only one possible point of view for a modern mind in a retrospect of these calamities; they were the errors from which alone a practice of toleration could emerge. M. Batiffol describes vividly the mutual excesses—the horror caused to the Catholics, especially in Paris, by the Huguenot iconoclasts and their provocative outrages on churches and sacred sculpture, no less than the violence of the orthodox persecution. This chapter in the history of civilization is unintelligible until one realizes that the Protestants, wherever for a moment they won even a local triumph, were at least as unwilling to tolerate the other creed as the Roman Church itself. With his admirable concrete method, M. Batiffol tells in detail the story of the little Southern town of Castres, where the Huguenots obtained a majority, and at once fell to persecuting the priests. The one statement that in twenty-seven years a single contemporary chronicler records 459 sieges and captures of castles round Castres alone, depicts the trouble of this age more vividly than any narrative of the wars. If his narrative of Saint Bartholomew is less vivid than some of his other performances—his spirited account of the murder of the Guises, for example—it is, on the other hand, a model of judgment and balance. He adheres to the moderate and, so to speak, official view, which holds that Catherine de Medici and the Court were under the influence of genuine panic, that their decision to order the murder of Coligny and five or six other leaders was taken suddenly, and only then because they really did believe (on evidence of the flimsiest kind) that the Huguenots were plotting to murder them, and that the wholesale massacre was the spontaneous doing of the fanatically Catholic populace. The difficulty in holding this view is that the Catholic party, especially in Italy, did in contemporary records boast not merely of the wholesale character of the massacre, but even of the subtlety of the treacherous plot behind it. On the whole, the general policy and character of Catherine before and after this abomination make the moderate view of her conduct the more probable. She meant to murder Coligny as an act of policy, precisely as Henry III. afterwards murdered the Guises, or, indeed, as Coligny himself was suspected of suborning the murderer of Francis of Guise. "We are nearly always ready to cut each other's throats," wrote Henry of Navarre. "We carry daggers and wear coats of mail and very often breastplates under our cloaks. I am only waiting for the opportunity to have a little fighting, for I am told that they are plotting to kill me, and I want to steal a march on them." When the great take to murder, it is small wonder that the mob will massacre. The amazing fact about this bloody page of French history is that one still may read on it so much that is chivalrous and noble. We wonder what a Prussian military theorist would have said of Henry IV.'s great action, when he had nearly reduced Paris by siege, in allowing the women and children to march out of the famished city.

M. Batiffol balances his political history by some good chapters on the development of literature and art. He is at his best in describing the French architecture of the Renaissance, and though his patriotic bias carries him unduly far in minimizing Italian influence, he succeeds in establishing his case that the direct influence of the classics and the native genius of France far outweighed any foreign contribution. Certainly the Italian Wars did little to promote the French Renaissance, and the first conquerors rode through Italy incapable even of seeing its treasures. M. Batiffol's nationalism, frank as it is, is its own corrective. When one notices that he invariably uses the term "truly French" as the final term of praise, one knows that certain allowances must be made. He concludes with a spirited picture of the social condition of France about 1600. His sketch of the bureaucracy, the dominant caste of lawyers, and the elaborate financial machine, could hardly be bettered in its compass; though we wonder whether the picture of the material prosperity of the peasantry is not a little too rosy. One would have welcomed some account of the interesting developments of trade at this time, the beginning of the East India Company, and of colonization in Canada, the Huguenot system of commerce and banking, and Sully's economic policy. To Sully, indeed, an unromantic but

creative genius, M. Batiffol does much less than justice. His scheme for a United States of Europe, for which he certainly made large diplomatic preparations, deserved more than one doubtful sentence. M. Batiffol's interest, however, is not primarily in the history of ideas. His aim was to tell a moving and vivid story, and he has thereby contributed notably to "the keener enjoyment of life." The translation by Elsie Finimore Buckley has been well and smoothly done.

GOOD EUROPEANISM.

"The Unity of Western Civilization." Essays, Arranged and Edited by F. S. MARVIN. (Oxford University Press. 7s. 6d. net.)

THE subject of these Essays is one which current events have brought prominently before us. When the attempt is made to impose a particular civilization upon Europe we fall back upon the conception of civilization as a common product to which all contribute, a sea into which many waters flow. And this point of view, though prompted by contemporary history, has a larger value, and can be applied, as Mr. Marvin reminds us, to "other aspects of life—e.g., morality and politics—to which conditions of space have only permitted indirect reference to be made in this volume."

An essay to which the reader will turn with peculiar interest is that by Professor Myres on "Unity in Prehistoric Times." It takes us behind nationalities—those potent bonds of association are secondary; prior to them, both in time and in significance, is that unity of blood, of speech, of cult, and of manner of life, which the Athenians, after Salamis, protested to the Persian envoy they could not betray. In "The Dawn of History" Professor Myres has discussed these several unities at greater length: here he dwells mainly on their material aspects—the influence of climate, soil, transport, food, &c.: the various cultures based on the use of cereals which he distinguishes respectively as the bread and cheese, the bread and olive, the bread and bacon, and the bread and beef. How much primitive history, too, is written on pottery? "Dead men, they say, tell no tales: potsherds are as truthful and as eloquent; for the very same reason that being once broken, they are dead and done with, and are allowed to lie quiet in the rubbish heap."

The idea underlying medieval society, spiritual and secular, was that of human, as distinct from national, unity. The conditions were favorable. The medieval world was small, uniform, and imperfectly articulated. "Custom was king of all things; and custom had assorted men in compartments in which they generally stayed"; though it should be added that the Church provided a means of passing from class to class of which frequent use was made. But

"an uncritical medievalism is the child of ignorance of the Middle Ages. Sick of vaunting national cultures, we may recur to an age in which they had not yet been born—the age of a single and international culture; but we must remember, all the same, that the strength of the Middle Ages was rooted in weakness. They were on a low stage of economic development; and it was precisely because they were on a low stage of economic development that they found it so easy to believe in the unity of civilization. Unity of a sort is easy when there are few factors to be united; it is more difficult, and is a higher thing, when it is a synthesis of many different elements. The Middle Ages had not attained a national economy: their economy was at the best municipal, and for the most part only parochial. A national economy has a higher economic value than a municipal or parochial economy, because it means the production of a greater number of utilities at a less cost, and a richer and fuller life of the mind, with more varied activities and more intricate connections. A national economy could only develop along with—perhaps we may say it could only develop through—a national system of politics; and the national State, which is with us to-day, and with some of whose works we are discontented, was a necessary condition of economic progress. With the coming of the national State, the facile internationalism of the Middle Ages had to disappear; and as economics and politics ran into national channels, the life of the spirit, hitherto an international life, suffered the same change, and national religion, if such a thing be not a contradiction in terms, was duly born."

Nationalism then was an escape from the limitations of medievalism; but it had limitations of its own; and much of the best thought and feeling of later generations has been occupied with the effort to overcome them. We shall not do

so, however, either by going back or by leaving out elements of the desired synthesis: this must be progressive and complete.

This was where the medieval Church failed: the attempt to make the part do duty for the whole broke down under an inner contradiction. The excluded elements took shape in Protestantism and Free Thought; had the Counter-Reformation succeeded in crushing them out of existence, the result would have been a relapse into sheer barbarism. The same must be said of similar short cuts to, and easy methods of, world unity: the several steps must be taken, the several stages passed through. The dream of a Napoleonic world-empire had much to recommend it. The ideas which the Emperor had taken over from the Revolution were not, like those of the Counter-Reformation, outworn; they were very much more living and more enlightened than those of the Powers which opposed him. But they made part civilization do duty for whole. France was ahead of the rest of Europe; but the contribution of the rest of Europe could not be dispensed with. Civilization, like religion, is a common property; not the differentia of a section, but the possession of the whole.

Another century has passed; and we stand face to face with a desperate, and, it is to be hoped, a last, attempt on similar lines and in a similar direction—the attempt to impose German civilization on the world. It will fail. German civilization has great qualities and great defects. But were it free from the latter, and were its merits ten times greater than they are, it could not—no particular and national civilization can—stand for civilization in general: the reason being that, since it is a part, and no more than a part, it falls short of the completeness of the whole.

Perhaps the real danger lies in the opposite direction: in the depreciation of elements of culture which come from what, for us, is, and will be for long, a tainted source. The present war cannot fail to lessen German influence, moral and spiritual as well as material, in Europe: there are signs of a reaction, partly instinctive, partly artificial, against German science, because German policy has gone fatally wrong. Follies of this sort will recoil, not on German science, which is the common property of the educated world, but on English culture, which they would put back half a century. Provincialism is the bane of English thinking:—

"It is in truth one of the most poignant features of the tragedy in which we are manfully and rightly bearing our part, that its community-sense in the world had never been so highly developed, or found so many channels in which to diffuse itself as just at the moment when the blow fell. The Socialist movements in all civilized countries have always had this as a leading motive; comrades and poor among themselves, these men have always been eager to stretch out a hand to those of like mind abroad. And in the last chapter we saw how among Christian communities throughout the world there has been in recent years a growing approximation. Neither the causes nor the effects of such forces can die away. They will reappear when the storm has passed, and rebuild the wreck."

AN UNHAPPY DUCHESS.

"Anne Hyde, Duchess of York." By J. R. HENSLOWE.
(Werner Laurie. 10s. 6d. net.)

THE life of Anne Hyde, the daughter of the great Chancellor, the first wife of James the Second, and the mother of two queens, should make a very interesting book, but Mr. Henslowe has merely put together, with not too much literary skill, an account of her brilliant and unhappy career drawn from sources of no great historical importance. The story of his first wife gives a sinister side of James the Second's character, for, having had the sense to appreciate her wit and cleverness, and the spirit to brave a great deal of opposition in order to marry her, he was not enough of a gentleman to treat her with decent consideration. Macaulay has written a few biting pages on the Court ruffian who invented the most outrageous calumnies about the Duchess, and still continued to receive, after his exposure, marks of esteem and friendship from the Duchess's husband. That the Duke should be faithless to her was, under the circumstances, a matter of course, and no Royal wife had ground for complaint, or, at any rate, for surprise on that score; but without being constant, he might have made her lonely life a great deal less intolerable than it was. This is the

leading feature of Anne Hyde's position: her great and increasing solitude. Doubtless she was partly to blame. She had wit, and what Burnet called great knowledge and a lively sense of things, qualities to which she owed her marriage and the friendship and support of Charles the Second; but she did not make a success of the delicate situation in which she found herself, and she gave an impression of arrogance. Pepys tells a story which may or may not be true to illustrate her avarice:—"Mr. Povy do tell me how he is like to lose his £400 a year pension of the Duke of York, which he took in consideration of his place that was taken from him. He tells me that the Duchess is a devil against him, and do now come, like Queen Elizabeth, and sits with the Duke of York's Council, and sees what they do, and she crosses out this man's wages and prices as she sees fit for saving money; but yet, he tells me, she reserves £5,000 a year for her own spending; and my Lady Peterborough by and by tells me that the Duchess do buy up mightily jewels." He gives another more agreeable picture of the Duke of York and the Duchess, "with all the great ladies sitting upon a carpet on the ground, there being no chairs, playing at 'I love my love with an A because he is so-and-so; and I hate him with an A because of this and that,' and some of them, but particularly the Duchess herself and my Lady Castlemaine, were very witty."

The unhappy Duchess died of cancer at the age of thirty-three. In her last years she became a convert to the Church of Rome. There has been a good deal of speculation on her motive. Burnet argued that she took this step in the desperate hope of winning back her husband's affection. We agree with Mr. Henslowe that this is an unpromising explanation. Her conversion would only be an embarrassment to the Duke; and the King, when he was told the secret, was in no doubt about the danger of letting it become public. After James came to the throne he published a confession which the Duchess had written describing the process of her conversion. The document reads strangely as the outpouring of a soul in a great spiritual struggle; but we have to remember the circumstances of the writer. She began by saying that her faith had first been unsettled by reading Doctor Heylin's "History of the Reformation," a book that had been recommended to her as likely to dispel any doubt. This set her on to thinking of the circumstances under which the great soul of Henry the Eighth had turned for peace to the new religion. Of course, to the Duchess this was the capital fact about the Reformation in England. The religion of the nation depended on its rulers, and therefore it became necessary to inquire why Henry the Eighth and Elizabeth had chosen Protestantism. Some would smile at this treatment of the issue between the two religions; but underneath this sharp and trenchant analysis of royal consciences there is a very genuine cry of a soul in distress. And this is surely the explanation of Anne's conversion. She had won what seemed a splendid position, and her wit and charm gained her many admirers, but her life was fundamentally a sad one. Her children died almost as fast as they were born, her husband was cold to her, and, as her father reminded her in a letter trying to dissuade her from the step, she had many enemies. Further, she had a most terrible disease. It is surely unnecessary to look beyond these facts for the explanation of her conversion. She wanted peace and deliverance from the disappointments and tragedies of her life, and the comfortable and conventional official religion that surrounded her did not provide either. Let us hope that she found them in the haven of her new faith. Many of her friends deserted her at the last in anger over her conversion. The Duke came to her bedside. "Dame, doe ye knowe me?" "Duke, Duke," came the answer, "death is terrible; death is very terrible!"

ROUTINE.

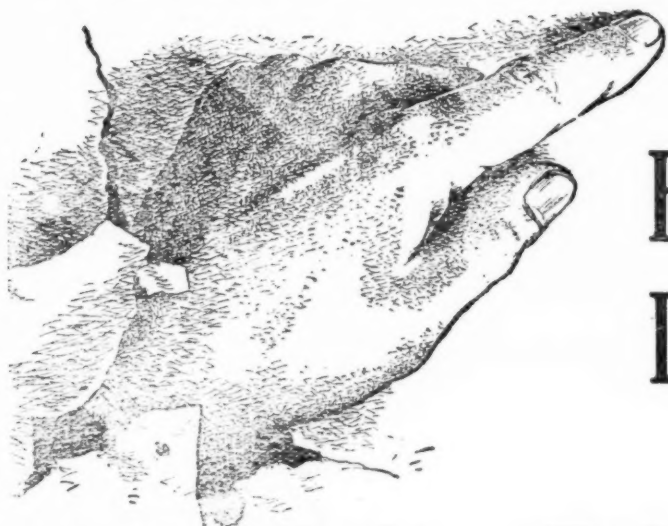
"Frey and his Wife." By MAURICE HEWLETT. (Ward, Lock. 3s. 6d. net.)

"The Honey Pot." By COUNTESS BAROYNSKA. (Hurst & Blackett. 6s.)

"Moll Davis." By BERNARD CAPES. (Allen & Unwin. 6s.)

It is a curious thing that Mr. Hewlett, after having, in his neo-Gothic way, put such a lavish coating of paint upon the medieval romance, should have turned his attention to the

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Scandinavian saga. Even though they both told stories, stories as long as a newspaper serial, it is a far cry from the troubadour to the skald. For Mr. Hewlett to write in the Scandinavian manner is as if Apuleius had set himself to translate Hesiod. But if his rather fantastic choice of theme surprises us, his method of treatment does not. True, the elaboration of detail, the "Roman de la Rose" air of picturesque excess and artificial chivalry have been shorn of their exuberance. "Frey and His Wife," in contrast to "Richard Yea and Nay," positively rejoices in the clipped phrase and the abrupt situation. The rhodomontade of speech, at any rate, gives way to the rhodomontade of action. But these concessions to a new material are a very long way from realizing the essential spirit of the saga. Mr. Hewlett's interpretation is utterly remote from the kind of impassive, fatalistic massiveness which his new medium demands. Nor does he come anywhere near its concrete simplicity—not because he is a bad craftsman, but because his natural facility finds its proper vent, not in working in wood or metal, but in tapestry. There is nothing stark or primitive whatever in Mr. Hewlett's use of the direct incident, the curt and Saxon phrase. It simply means that he gets his effects with few, instead of many, colors. But that by no means disposes of the insistently pictorial element. Frey is not a Berserker or a Viking or a hewer and a slasher, but a painted wooden idol, worshipped by the Swedes. To him and his "wife," Sigid, comes Gunnar Helming, an outlaw from Olaf Trygvasson's Norway, on a false charge of having slain the king's retainer, Halward. The good-humored and resourceful Gunnar appoints himself as Frey's high priest, and in his hierarchical capacity works easy miracles, abolishes human sacrifice, falls in love with the amiable Sigid, and has some thoroughly enjoyable experiences. Frey, proving rather a nuisance, he chops him in half and impersonates him on his festive rounds of blessing the crops and accumulating substance from the gratitude of the people. Then his kinsman comes to fetch him home, when the murder, in course of time, is planted on the right shoulders. Gunnar, after such a promising initiation, becomes a Christian, settles down to conjugal felicity, and there's an end of him. It is an agreeable and readable enough tale, with very few lapses into a sham romantic glamor. But a little trivial, is it not?

"The Honey Pot" is a little better than one would have expected after perusing its title, cover, and initial page. How can one help being violently suspicious of the foot-lights of the Diadem Theatre, and of people called Maggie Delamere, Alexandra Kesey, and Lord Chalfont? Maggie, who belongs to the genus "irresponsible and warm-hearted," makes friends with the pure-souled Alexandra and gets her a chorus engagement with herself at the Diadem. The familiar bumble-bees buzz about the honey pot—the jaded, cynical manager, de Freyne; the ruffianly Woolf, who makes Maggie his mistress, manœuvres uneasily about the outskirts of the more shady gentry, marries one of them surreptitiously, and deserts his backstairs love when she is desperately enamoured of him; and the ineffable, courtly, and chivalrous Lord Chalfont. For all that, the author looks at the stage in a shrewd and critical light:—

"In her innocence she made the common error of imagining that the public chooses its plays, its novels, its pictures, its music, and its actors and actresses for itself. She did not stop to think that there might be gradations in that public, and that the vast majority of it is deprived of selective taste by the interested parties who cater for it. The voice is there right enough, and the approval is genuine; but that has to be discounted by the fact that the public has nothing better to approve of. For the public—the crowd—is a led horse. It is enormously manageable,

it does what it is told and goes where it is told. Its taste has never been given a chance of being educated because of the fare that has been forced upon it. Its purveyors feed it as injudiciously as an ignorant man will a horse. For the want of anything better the horse will eat what is given it. So will the public."

These are sufficiently remarkable statements in a popular novel. It is an attitude like this, which regards the stage not as a delicately immoral fairyland, but as a business, like any other business, which makes "The Honey Pot" not only fairly interesting, but invests even the rather makeshift characters with some warmth and liveliness. It is only towards the end that the Countess finally exiles her story in the trim groves of Arcadia. Alexandra marries a specialist in the pink of propriety and prosperity, and Maggie, after being abandoned by Woolf, is saved from throwing herself in front of a steam-roller by the opportune appearance of Lord Chalfont. The appalling pomposity of the noble lord, who offers Maggie marriage as he would offer the porter of his club a tip, is something too deep for tears.

"Moll Davis," on the other hand, is exactly what we should have expected. We feel, as we read it, that we ought to say something like this:—

"Our attention is riveted from the moment that the débonair and fascinating heroine steps upon the stage to when she beguiles the Duke of York with her impish tricks in the closes of Mulberry Gardens. Verily, she has captivately renewed the frolic atmosphere of the Restoration. My Lord Chesterfield—his sprightly lady—the buckish George Hamilton—and winsome, roguish Moll herself, how gaily they flit across the pages! It is one of those books which, once taken up, it is impossible to lay down again. . . ." And so forth.

The Week in the City.

THE week has been almost destitute of interesting movements, either on the Stock Exchange or in the Money Market. There is a general feeling that the end of the Verdun operations must be awaited, and that if the Germans definitely fail, we may be not very far from peace. This sort of optimism is promoted by increasing anxiety in the City and in business circles generally, where the drain of men into the Army is being severely felt. Uneasiness about the public and private credit is indicated by the number of people who have supported the proposal for an issue of lottery or premium bonds which might appeal to the sporting and gambling instincts of the working classes. It is enough to say, that in this case the moral strength of Ministers was supported by electoral considerations which associate the Nonconformist conscience with a large class of voters. The alliance of two London banks with a group of Italian banks to form a company for exploiting Italian commerce and industry, is a sign of the times. It will be interesting to see how the capital of a million can be raised.

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